

## Category: Recreation

### Section: Recreation Managements - General

**PC #: 387**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should be more concerned about impacts from non-motorized use.**

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F2-A1: (We propose that user-built routes would not be recognized as designated routes as part of the Forest Service trail system unless they have been validated as system routes through site-specific analysis, or permitted under special-use permits.) Action AM-F2-A2: (We propose that cross-country wheeled motorized travel would continue to be prohibited.) Action AM-F2-A3: (We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas.) Actions AM-F2-A1 to A3. While it is tempting to focus on motorized recreation, heavy use by foot, ski and bicycle traffic can also displace wildlife, spread weeds, cause erosion, etc. (State Agency or Official, Missoula, MT - #697)

**PC #: 385**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should consider a "free permit" system before any effort to limit use in the Bob.**

Sample Statement:

RM-F3: In the 27 years we have operated in the Bob Marshall, we are not aware of any large increased demand for day use activities. I am aware of a desire for dog sled trips in the winter, but this activity would be quite limited and certainly would not cause conflicts among user groups. Earlier you mentioned photography trip requests. This is nothing new and can be accommodated with no additional impact. Perhaps there is a problem with fishing groups wanting to float the South Fork of the Flathead or other streams. This I agree should be very limited because those fishermen disturb and interrupt wading and shore fisherman that go into the wilderness to get away from that kind of activity. Also camp sites could quickly be overused causing resource damage and conflict with other users. Maybe I am missing something here. Your description of problems is not clear as to exactly what they are. I'm definitely opposed to just generally "upping" the restrictions as a matter of course. You mention possibly limiting entry and use. This should be a last resort. A better method might be to require everyone to obtain a "free permit" and when that is prepared you can then require avoiding certain heavily used areas and writing that on the permit. (Special Use Permittee, Augusta, MT - #676)

**PC #: 384**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should recognize the long-term relationship with the Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp and ensure that they continue to be allowed to operate.**

Sample Statement:

I don't like Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.) because over a number of decades the Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp has developed a successful program utilizing hiking and backpacking and based on the congenial encouragement and cooperation of the National Forest Service personnel. Training in low-impact use of the Forests and respect for these natural resources and scenic sites has been given to generation of folks. Forest Service personnel have been amazed at the highly developed low impact use of the Forest employed by the camp. To be denied this use by the Forest Service **after** many years of program development would be devastating to the camp. (Church, Missoula, MT - #662)

**PC #: 390**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should not use levels to determine motorized use as these users value solitude and remoteness as well.**

Sample Statement:

The amount of use that a route receives is not a criterion for non-motorized routes (see later comment about solitude on CDNST) and should not be a requirement for motorized routes. Solitude, challenging, and remote motorized routes are highly valued by motorized recreationists also. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

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**PC #: 383**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service needs more information about the impacts of OHV use before further restrictions are considered.**

Sample Statement:

There have been no substantive analysis of recreation opportunities, quantitatively or qualitative for snowmobiles or motorbikes. The appropriate action is to defer any further restriction until the accurate and factual information is obtained. No funding, insufficient manpower, inadequate recourses and a string of others are no longer acceptable excuses to allow the agency to further restrict opportunities for motorbikers and dispersed recreation snowmobilers. All have been used to justify more closures without adequate analysis of the facts regarding the cumulative effects on motorbikers and snowmobilers. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #41)

**PC #: 382**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should improve facilities to accommodate more use and better meet the demand for recreation.**

Sample Statement:

Finding RM-F3Action RM-F3-A1: (We propose to manage all recreation activities, including Outfitter Guide use permits, based on the land's ability to accommodate activity without unacceptable resource impacts and diminishing desired experience levels. We would develop trigger points for early identification of deteriorating experience levels and resource conditions and a tool box of suggested management actions designed to mitigate or change these conditions. Management activities would range from educational (least restrictive), to limited-use permits (most restrictive). How about improving the recreation and camping facilities to accommodate more use, rather than "managing" through an increasingly prescriptive and restrictive permit program? (Multiple Use or Land Rights, Whitefish, MT - #721)

Sample Statement:

We are very concerned about current trends and policies that eliminate motorized recreational opportunities. Our field observations of trail use in Multiple-Use areas has found that 90% of the visitors observed on travel ways in multiple-use areas were associated with motorized or mechanized recreation. We ask that you manage our forests to meet the needs of all visitors including motorized or wheeled visitors. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #141)

Sample Statement:

Since OHV use is a legitimate recreational use for forest land and the demand for access to the forest for OHV use is increasing, FNF should plan for this increased use to minimize environmental damage and overcrowding while maximizing the recreational experience of all users. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #968)

**PC #: 381**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should not privatize public land recreation.**

Sample Statement:

National forests provide a different kind of recreational experience not available elsewhere. The plan needs to ensure that public lands remain public and that any tendency to marketize, industrialize, or privatize public land recreation are rejected. Unfortunately, fee demo and partnerships, with corporate entities or special interests compromise public recreational values, natural values, and the unique wildland experiences only public lands can provide. (Preservation/Conservation, Moscow, ID - #509)

**PC #: 23**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should limit motorized use.**

Sample Statement:

My family & I want the Bitterroot, Lolo & Flathead Nat. Forests protected from disastrous revised plans that will cause so much damage to them with too many ORVs & more roads. This will have such an adverse impact on the wilderness & wildlife, not to mention the solitude. Please keep motor vehicles on roads, where they belong. I also ask that the Bitterroot and Lolo forests designate the 100-mile-long Sapphire Crest Trail from Patty Canyon to the Continental Divide Trail in the Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness as a Montana Heritage Trail, free of off-road-vehicle traffic. (Individual, Mc Lean, VA - #899)

Sample Statement:

We ask that Krause Basin, an area first closed seasonally to motorized use in 1988, be closed yearlong to motorized use other than on roads left open for such use after adequate protection of wildlife security and other forest resources has been provided. Indeed, we ask that all three Revision Forests follow the lead of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the Montana Code Annotated by prohibiting the use of motorized vehicles other than on open roads. (Preservation/Conservation, Kalispell, MT - #544)

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Sample Statement:

Motor sports should not be all owed to dominate forest planning to the detriment of other resource values. (Preservation/Conservation, Helena, MT - #526)

## **PC #: 380**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service needs to improve enforcement of rules that limit OHV use.**

Sample Statement:

A travel plan that restricts use must necessarily include provisions for enforcement. Restricting use, without enforcement, is the equivalent of no restriction. Many users honor restrictions, but field observations show that many disregard them and thereby destroy their usefulness. Any decision concerning use of trails must be accompanied by careful consideration of the level of user conflict that may occur (Individual, Bigfork, MT - #350)

Sample Statement:

I think more resources should go into enforcing ATV regulations; a few expensive tickets would eliminate much of the ATV trespass as word would quickly spread among the ATV community that Lolo is finally enforcing the restrictions. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #351)

Sample Statement:

We also have concerns about OHV use that may damage resources and the environment due to lack of funding or staff for enforcement. An effective policing and enforcement program is needed to assure that motorized access does not occur in restricted areas. (Federal Agency or Official, Helena, MT - #257)

## **PC #: 392**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should segregate motorized and non-motorized uses.**

Sample Statement:

I can attest to the unsafe conditions posed by sharing hiking trails with motorized vehicles. While hiking on Col Mountain, we were almost run off the trail by three dirt bikes racing around corners. I have also witnessed dirt bikes on off-limit trails in Jewel Basin. (Individual, Kalispell, MT - #410)

Sample Statement:

There are many areas where a few short years ago we could ride our horses and now the areas are unsafe because of the high-speed, noisy, obnoxious motorcycles and ATV's. One such place is Columbia Mountain; another is the trail to Strawberry Lake. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #617)

Sample Statement:

The following items were agreed to by those present: If possible, motorized and horse trail routes should be separated (unless trail is frequented by multiple user types (i.e., a "mixed use" trail). ...The group clarified that the statement was focused on a) the safety concerns of mixed use trails in certain circumstances, particularly when mixing horse and mechanized users and b) on providing trail users with their desired experience, particularly the desire for a "quiet" experience. ..."Motorized/mechanized uses should normally be separated from horse/hiking uses to provide for safety and recreational experience. Multiple use trails are often acceptable, but may need monitoring for safety issues and user conflict. Consider separating uses by alternating days between different types of use.[]" (Place Based Groups, Hamilton, MT - #827)

## **PC #: 388**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should emphasize non-motorized use over motorized use.**

Sample Statement:

I am primarily concerned with the management of personal motorized off-road vehicles (PMRVs) such as dirt bikes, ATVs and snowmobiles. I do not believe current Forest Service management of PMRVs is adequately protecting our natural resources or providing fair opportunities for quiet non-motorized recreation. With the exception of Wilderness areas I see foot trails being turned into Aix roads and new illegal roads and scars created by machines throughout the whole forest. While I realize that the Forest Service does not have the manpower or the funding to be everywhere on the forest at a! times there are ways that the Forest Service can and must manage off-road vehicles to lessen the resource impacts and protect access and recreation for non- motorized users. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #536)

Sample Statement:

Mounting pressure to open more and more land to motorized travel is simply not a wise way to preserve the unique and incredible areas in question. Snowmobiles, and especially ATV's, are ever increasing in range and power which enable them to

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access more distant lands and even steeper terrain than ever before. Having seen and experienced some of the negative effects on our land and resources by these vehicles first hand, I strongly believe they should be strictly limited as to where they are allowed. (Individual, Polson, MT - #581)

Sample Statement:

Don't allow loud, stinky engines to deprive hikers, paddlers, skiers and climbers of the aromas, sounds, and pacing of the natural world in those places where we can still do so. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #607)

### **PC #: 376**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should consider resource protection first when determining levels of motorized use.**

Sample Statement:

With regard to recreation management, I believe individual areas should be evaluated and managed based on the land's ability to support it and the appropriateness of activities for each area. (Individual, Polebridge, MT - #387)

Sample Statement:

A primary consideration of public land managers should be to protect the resource. Some degree of resource damage is inherent with most uses of public land; however, because of their size, power, speed, and sound and fume emissions, ATV's tend to have the greatest impact of all typical recreational trail uses. (Individual, Bigfork, MT - #350)

### **PC #: 379**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should maintain or increase opportunities for motorized use.**

Sample Statement:

Develop a publicly acceptable system or systems to meet needs and desires of local residents for forest access and forest management policies. Conduct a public forum to extract and quantify the needs and desires of the affected majority. Develop separate motorized use categories. Dirt bikes and four wheelers need different trails - dirt bikes need a single track; 4 wheelers need a road base or two tracks. Keep remaining open forest open. (Seventy five percent of the forest is either roadless or wilderness; this leaves 25% of the forest to use for recreation or other uses. We must keep at least this open for multiple uses). Keep areas open suitable for "loop" travel for all vehicles, auto, snow cat, motorcycle, 4 wheelers, accessing ridges and vistas. Bring current road and trail closed maps up to date. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #967)

Sample Statement:

The obvious answer to overcrowding and conflict among different user groups would be to keep roads open, remove restrictions, and let people disperse among a much larger area. (Place Based Groups, Paradise, MT - #258)

Sample Statement:

Most environmental documents have not taken into consideration the fact that motorized multiple-use designation serves all recreation activities, instead of the few served by non-motorized/wilderness designations. For example, motorized roads and trails allow access to dispersed camping sites for RVs, the collection of firewood, access for fishing and hunting, target shooting, access for bird and wildlife viewing, walking and bicycling opportunities, and family picnics. We request that the analysis and decision-making fully recognize all of these activities and the significant cumulative impact that closing roads and trails has had on all multiple-use recreationists. Additionally, we request that an adequate mitigation plan be included as part of this action to compensate for past cumulative impacts. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

### **PC #: 386**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should anticipate and plan for new forms of recreation that will be developed.**

Sample Statement:

So impacts are not only occurring on existing developed sites, but are also appearing on what were previously dispersed recreation sites. In addition to these trends, your plan should anticipate and address new forms of recreation, such as have been developed over the last 15 years. (State Agency or Official, No Address - #694)

### **PC #: 401**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should be finding creative ways to reduce conflicts without closures.**

Sample Statement:

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A new forest plan needs to reduce conflicts between what could be coexisting uses and resources whether it be bears, lynx, water, fish (bull trout), snowmobilers, OHV, hikers, etc. and trees (real forest). We should be reducing conflicts rather than pitting species and opportunities against each other. Most conflicts could be reduced with some reasonable guide lines that allow for flexibility with local decision making. (Individual, Whitefish, MT - #811)

Sample Statement:

The group also discussed how some places successfully alternate uses on the same trail. There was considerable interest in this idea for areas currently popular with all kinds of users, but with resulting user conflicts. Those present asked that the wording be adjusted to include and clarify these discussions (see outcomes below). The group briefly discussed how this idea of alternating use could be applicable at Lake Como; particularly separating days where motorized and non-motorized boat use is allowed on the lake. This would both provide some quiet user days for anyone using the lake (including the lakeshore and trails) and days when it would actually be relatively safe to take a canoe on the lake. (Place Based Groups, Hamilton, MT - #827)

### **PC #: 391**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should emphasize shared use rather than segregating uses or allowing for exclusive use.**

Sample Statement:

Diversity of recreation opportunities can only be accomplished through management for multiple-uses and reasonable coexistence among visitors. Multiple-use lands must be managed for shared-use versus segregated-use or exclusive-use. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

### **PC #: 396**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should call upon motorized users to help maintain the trail system.**

Sample Statement:

We understand the operation and maintenance budget constraints facing the agency. Motorized recreationists would work in collaboration with the agency to obtain trail and OHV funding for the project area. Additionally, motorized recreationists can be called upon to help with the maintenance of trails in the project area. In many cases motorized recreationists have been providing trail maintenance for many years and are quite willing to continue in return for continued access. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

Sample Statement:

Have groups, riding clubs & interested individuals help with, take care of, take charge of trail maintenance and improvements. We are willing to help improve our riding areas. (Recreational, Whitefish, MT - #966)

### **PC #: 395**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should use all of the tools at its disposal, including education, to resolve conflicts and reduce impacts before closing a trail to motorized use.**

Sample Statement:

BRC believes that proper management is the key to reducing conflict and suggests that other management options, aside from closure, be implemented. Such options could include, but certainly would not be limited to: Educating the non-motorized visitors about when and where they may encounter vehicle traffic as well as informing them of areas where they may avoid such encounters. Educating the vehicle-assisted visitor of where the road or trail might be shared with non-motorized visitors, and encouraging slower speeds and a more courteous ethic in these areas. Re routing either use so as to avoid sections of roads or trails that are extremely popular with both groups. For example, a hiking trail can be constructed to avoid a section of popular OHV routes. Of an equestrian trail may be constructed to avoid a section of popular mountain bike route, etc. Dispersing all forms of recreational use so as to minimize conflict and create a more desirable experience.

(Preservation/Conservation, Pocatello, ID - #545)

Sample Statement:

The FS will utilize all trail maintenance and upgrading management techniques, such as, bridging, puncheon, realignment, drains, and dips to prevent closure or loss of motorized trail use. Trails should not be closed because of a problem with a bad section of trail. The solution will be to fix the problem area or reroute the trail, not to close it. If funding or manpower is a problem, then other resources should be looked to including local volunteer groups, state or national OHV funding.<sup>18</sup> Each road and trail will be inventoried and evaluated on the ground to determine its recreational value and any significant problem areas that require mitigation measures. (Preservation/Conservation, Pocatello, ID - #545)

**PC #: 394**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should provide motorized trail opportunities on each ranger district.**

Sample Statement:

Actively manage OHV use by providing an extensive designated route trail system that satisfies the experience desired by OHV recreationists, which keys upon the monitoring factors of customer satisfaction, education, compliance and enforcement." (Preservation/Conservation, Pocatello, ID - #545)

Sample Statement:

Please incorporate in the overall forest-wide standards provisions to retain or create one single track trail or group of trails per ranger district to provide meaningful recreation opportunities for motorbikes and mountain bikes. I believe these activities are appropriate on the same trails. As defined by the users (per ROS), a meaningful motorbike recreational experience should consist of a 45 to 55 mile loop or a 25 to 30 mile out and back route of single track, not two track or road, unless incidental to the whole route. The ROS book states that the experience and quality thereof is defined by the user not the manager or administrator. Motorbikers do not derive a satisfactory experience on roads or 2-track trails unless this component is incidental to the remainder of the ride. It needs to be single track. There are currently 39 inventoried trails, although no distinction is made whether single or 2-track for a total of 508 miles. Seventy-one percent are already closed yearlong. Of the 1448.9 miles of trails on the Bitterroot NE there are only a total of 169.9 miles on four ranger districts still open to motorized recreation (less administrative closures not listed on your map) comprised of 11 trails total. These trails are not contiguous so they cannot be connected. It seems that opportunities for meaningful recreation by motorbikers and mountain bikers have fallen through the cracks. The effect of individual closures has been small but the bigger picture has been overlooked. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #41)

**PC #: 393**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should provide a reasonable opportunity for our aging population and handicapped people to see the backcountry.**

Sample Statement:

Goal: "Provide a reasonable range of access opportunity to see the backcountry through OHV use by youth, the aging population and the physically handicapped." Objectives 1. Primitive ROS should be designated only where existing uses are compatible, leaving as much of the forest open for access by the disabled via vehicles. 2. Where appropriate, facilities should be constructed that are disabled access friendly c. Recreational and family values benefits Goal: "Through comprehensive inventories and detailed, yet understandable mapping, provide a range of OHV trail riding opportunities that fulfill the experience desired by family outings." (Preservation/Conservation, Pocatello, ID - #545)

**PC #: 389**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should maintain or expand historic uses of the forest.**

Sample Statement:

Hunting, fishing, berry picking, mushroom harvesting, snowmobiling and horseback riding (to name but a few) must all continue; and, access through roads and pathways should not be denied. I would encourage and support discussion in the future for expansion of these rights of access to and se off land! (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #494)

**PC #: 403**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should continue to prohibit cross-country motorized use.**

Sample Statement:

--Access Management:AM-F2 I support prohibiting cross-country travel by OHV. User built routes should not be recognized as established routes. An OHV and Mountain bike impact is transport of weed seed and soil disturbance allowing weed establishment. Wildlife security is also compromised by OHV use. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #541)

Sample Statement:

With the growing problem of improper and illegal off-road vehicle use everywhere on the national forest system, including the Flathead National Forest, and the attendant negative impacts of that use on many other forest values, including wildlife, streams and watersheds, recreation, etc., we in the Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association believe it imperative that public land management agencies and groups like our own work together to protect resource values that are harmed by improper use of off-road vehicles. Consequently, we have developed a policy, as an organization, that we wish to communicate to the Flathead National Forest, where many of our members recreate, as a request that this viewpoint be given consideration in the development and enforcement of any and all policies established on the Forest when dealing with ORV use. Stated simply, our recommendation is: "The Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association hereby establishes a policy regarding ORV (off road vehicles) use that ORV's should not be allowed off any road, or trail designated to their use,

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on any public land." (Preservation/Conservation, Hamilton, MT - #38)

Sample Statement:

I believe American society has come to a majority consensus that off-trail riding (uncontrolled creation of informal trails and roads by individuals) is completely inappropriate and must be made illegal. (Individual, Minneapolis, MN - #532)

### **PC #: 397**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should not change the current system of outfitter/guide permitting on the Plains/Thompson Falls Ranger District.**

Sample Statement:

After talking to one local guide/outfitter recently, his comment was that there has been little, if any, conflict between guided clients and the general public on the Plains/Thompson Falls Ranger Districts. The guide felt that the Forest Service permit system is working well, and should be left the way it is now. (Place Based Groups, Paradise, MT - #258)

### **PC #: 399**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should implement policies to further limit human caused food sources for bears.**

Sample Statement:

EM-F6: AgreeEM-F6-AI (We propose to develop consistent guidance on the three forests to eliminate or minimize human-caused food sources for bears.): Agree (Place Based Groups, Victor, MT - #560)

Sample Statement:

Bear resistant boxes. Sue noted that this is a less pressing issue for the Bitterroot than the other two forests, but appropriate and forward looking. Bear-resistant food is important when dealing with black bears as well as grizzlies. Helen shared her experience that many horsemen are already equipped and accustomed to these practices because of experience in bear country and this wouldn't be a great change for them. (Place Based Groups, Hamilton, MT - #827)

### **PC #: 402**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should not lump all motorized use together because they each have different impacts.**

Sample Statement:

Motorcycle trail riders enjoy riding single track trails. Differentiate between ATV and motorcycle trails. Single track trails that are not acceptable for ATV use should be open for motorcycle use. We don't believe that OHV use should be such a broad category. 4 wheelers should not be allowed on single track trails. Jeeps and 4x4s should not be allowed on 4 wheeler trails. Each category deserves their own designated trails to recreate. However motorcycles should be allowed on all these trails. (Recreational, Whitefish, MT - #966)

Sample Statement:

I would propose more single track trails be open to multiple users both motorized and non-motorized and closed to the more damaging four wheeled units that have more impact and are more capable of the destructive cross country travel. Also there is likely less social conflict with two wheeled vehicles than 4 wheeled ATVs. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #518)

Sample Statement:

OHV use (wheeled use) and snowmobile use (over-the-snow use) should not be lumped together. Snowmobiles were not included in the OHV Policy issued several years ago by the Northern Region. Winter motorized use, specifically snowmobiling, has none of the above-cited adverse effects on water quality, wildlife habitat, or eroded soils. User conflicts and negative recreation experiences between winter recreationists are minimal. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #489)

### **PC #: 404**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should allow cross-country motorized travel.**

Sample Statement:

I really don't like Action AM-F2-A2(We propose that cross-country wheeled motorized travel would continue to be prohibited.)because....disable people would not be able to hunt, fish, or pick berries. (Individual, No Address - #81)

### **PC #: 405**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should limit bicycles to designated trails.**

Sample Statement:

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Action AM-F4-A1: We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.  
COMMENT: We would be in agreement with limiting bicycles (mechanized) use to designated routes and to prohibit cross-country travel. In addition, it is recommended that there be no mechanized travel within the following:1. Wilderness Study Areas.2. Roadless Area Review and Evaluation RARE areas identified in LRMP Appendix C road less inventories.3. Inventoried Roadless Areas.4. Unroaded, those areas not currently inventoried that have the potential to be placed in category 1 or 2 above. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #230)

**PC #: 406**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should not limit bicycles to designated routes.**

Sample Statement:

In regards to your forest plan and limiting bikes to trails because of erosion and conflicts. I've seen a lot of erosion from badly design trails. I have seen much user conflict but if you mention it in a report you can get people to agree. Also bikers do go off trail. We did a ride over in Butte (some guys 2 or 3 times a year). It was over the east ridge and you carried your bike for over an hour. Part of the fun. You also have hunters using bikes to get game out. They won't be on trails. If you don't restrict the hikers-don't restrict the bikers. (Individual, No Address - #253)

**PC #: 398**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should reduce outfitter use in the Bob.**

Sample Statement:

This level of commercial presence forces us to compete for resources; fish, game, and solitude. We want to be able to stalk, track, and still hunt with some degree of privacy, without seeing a dozen or more other hunters. We don't appreciate outfitter tree stands left up season long and year round. We want to be able to find those special wallows and licks without feeling like they are claimed property of the outfitters. We don't appreciate orange ribboned trails to every lick and wallow or marking hunting routes through timber patches to pickup spots. These guys are using reams of fluorescent ribbon and never pick up a piece. We come home from our hunt with a pocket full of ribbons; testament to their affect on our hunt. We don't appreciate outfitted clients being posted on all the major elk (river) crossings especially in the afternoons. We are entitled to a quality wilderness experience too. (Individual, No Address - #924)

**PC #: 400**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should restrict recreation use only if there are resource impacts and not because of user conflicts.**

Sample Statement:

Restrictions on the type of recreational use should be based solely on resource considerations (i.e., peer-reviewed research conclusions), except in some limited situations where severe user conflict issues are documented. Any restrictions based on user conflict avoidance should be through public process supported by independent survey data. Restrictions in these areas should be based on science and existing law, not politics and advocacy organization preferences. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #413)

## Section: Recreation Types: Non-Commercial, Dispersed, or Unspecified

**PC #: 378**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should restrict OHV use to established roads.**

Sample Statement:

Forest trails should be managed for traditional non-motorized uses. Motor vehicles should be restricted to roads. I love to hike and camp in the Lolo and am very concerned that within a few years wild habitat and quiet trails will be consumed by ATV roads, weeds, and motor vehicles. If this is allowed to happen, we will all be diminished plus the wildlife and plant life we supposedly value. (Individual, Saint Regis, MT - #355)

Sample Statement:

Cars and other motor vehicles should remain on existing roads. A forest-wide standard to protect and manage remaining forest trails for traditional non-motorized uses is an essential part of the forest plan. (Individual, Hickory, NC - #407)

Sample Statement:

Traditional recreational uses of the roadless areas of our forests are hiking, backpacking, horse travel, fishing, hunting, berry and mushroom picking, skiing, snowshoeing and canoeing; all quiet pursuits. Motorized recreationists don't have a god given



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right to travel off road. I believe that motor vehicles of any type should be limited to roads only. Off road travel degrade trails and the landscape and spread weeds. (Individual, Whitefish, MT - #622)

### **PC #: 416**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should prohibit motorized use in roadless areas and other wildlands.**

Sample Statement:

We should fully protect all of the Lolo wildlands with the current policies against motorized use. This standard should remain in any new forest plan. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #251)

Sample Statement:

I also strongly support the expansion of these protected areas and stronger enforcement of non- motorized travel restrictions. The complete restriction of motorized traffic from the wild lands in both the Lolo and Bitterroot forests is essential toward maintaining their pristine beauty for generations to come, as well as for the health and welfare of the wildlife that makes these areas their home. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #440)

Sample Statement:

There should be no ATV's, no MOTORBIKES, or other motorized vehicles any of the forest lands adjoining these areas. Off road vehicles cannot be properly managed and they are in direct conflict with many, many other important values. They are a huge threat to the ecosystem and often have severe conflict with other users, wildlife and scenic/aesthetic values that Americans hold so dear. There are thousands of miles of roaded areas. Do not let our last wild lands be ruined by this selfish, uncontrollable and very damaging activity. (Individual, Choteau, MT - #768)

### **PC #: 408**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should not open airstrips in the North Fork of the Flathead.**

Sample Statement:

Where are air strips addressed? These have a huge potential for impacting the environment. None of the existing airstrips in the North Fork should ever be opened for public use. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #534)

Sample Statement:

I understand that there is an effort to re open some dirt airstrips that have been closed by the Forest Service such as the abandoned Sanderson airstrip in the North Fork. I strongly oppose any reactivation of the strips. The Forest Service spent public money to purchase these strips and closed many of them after an analysis revealed the strips were not compatible with the surrounding area and management direction. Airplane traffic is already noticeable over many of our remote areas. The addition and promotion of more strips will only make this situation worse. (Individual, Kalispell, MT - #752)

### **PC #: 374**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should use the ROS system to determine recreation use.**

Sample Statement:

Mark helped define that a motorized "challenge" route means top speed would be 1-4 mph. to navigate the terrain. These "challenge" routes mean cars would look at them and say "no way!" There are steep hills with extremely rough terrain. There can be rocks as high as your belly button. The machines can climb a 45 degree decent and never spin a tire. ATVs will go slow on these trails due to driver fatigue from the steepness and rough terrain. An example would be Car others near Anaconda on Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest. The Curlew Mines area outside of Victor was an ideal location, but for some reason three of the four legs were closed to motorized vehicles. The F.S. needs to look at experiences wanted by each type of user, ROS designation, etc., when determining possible OHV areas. (Place Based Groups, Hamilton, MT - #827)

### **PC #: 407**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service need to recognize aviation as a legitimate use of National Forest Lands and keep backcountry airstrips open.**

Sample Statement:

I would not like to see any further restrictions for snowmobilers, motorcyclers or ATV's. I feel that there are enough restrictions and regulations already in place to handle these uses. I also feel the same way about aviation. The backcountry airstrips in the Flathead: Spotted Bear, Meadow Creek, Schafer, Condon, and Wurtz should remain open without restrictions for airplanes. Additionally the Nine Mile airstrip on the Lolo should be opened for use without restrictions. There should also be no new over flight restrictions. (Individual, Plains, MT - #90)

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## Sample Statement:

Aviation is not mentioned in the plan; perhaps this is intentional, and the Forest Service hopes to make airplanes and airstrips go away. This is not realistic. Aviation has lower impact on the forest than horse travel, for example. Esthetically, wilderness groups prefer horses to planes, but a pack of 15 horses outfitting a group of rafters has significant effects on the trails and meadows, in addition to potentially spreading exotic seeds in their feed and droppings. Aircraft users should be given the same consideration that other users, and ignoring them in planning for the next 20 years is poor planning. (Individual, No Address - #372)

## Sample Statement:

There is no reference to aviation, either in support of U. S. Forest Service use of aircraft in land management roles or other aviation interests in the use of aviation for recreational purposes and National Forest access. The pilot community does not wish to be ignored in the forest planning process. We do not want to be told in the future: "it's not in the plan, so we cannot consider your concern." Interest in and use of recreational aircraft is growing, and the Forest Service needs to recognize the existence of this activity as well as the requirement for expanded recreational opportunities on Federal lands. There is one aviation publication, "Pilot Getaways", that is solely devoted to articles on both urban and backcountry destinations for pilots. Most other aviation periodicals have at least one article per issue on pilot destinations. From a personal experience of flying over the past forty-plus years, I have seen a growth in demand for backcountry landing sites for recreational endeavors. Your forest plan should reflect ideas and actions to meet this demand just like it should for other forms of recreational use. (Individual, Polson, MT - #406)

## **PC #: 414**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should allow motorized use on user created trails.**

## Sample Statement:

I really don't like Action AM-F2-A1 (We propose that user-built routes would not be recognized as designated routes as part of the Forest Service trail system unless they have been validated as system routes through site-specific analysis, or permitted under special-use permits) because I want the ability to fully utilize the national forest lands in my jeep, truck and motorcycle in a responsible manner. (Individual, Whitefish, MT - #500)

## Sample Statement:

Very opposed to our change in policy re. user-built trails", to closed unless put on the system. (Individual, Hayden, ID - #311)

## **PC #: 377**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should eliminate OHV use from National Forest System Lands.**

## Sample Statement:

Ban ORV use!!! (Individual, Boulder, CO - #594)

## **PC #: 415**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should not attempt to meet the demand for OHV use.**

## Sample Statement:

Action AM-F1-A1: (We propose to identify areas with the highest potential for OHV motorized use. Actual changes to existing designated routes would not occur until after future site-specific project level analysis was completed.) Including recognition of ecosystem carrying capacity. While OHV use has increased, the amount of motorized trails for OHV use has not kept up with the demand. Demand may have already exceeded sustainable ecosystem carrying capacity (Individual, Condon, MT - #312)

## Sample Statement:

It's important to mention that the Forest Service should not feel obligated to meet the lion's share of Montana's OHV "demand." Only one-third of the state is public land. OHV recreation could theoretically occur on the other two-thirds of the state, perhaps through access fees with private landowners. If private landowners aren't offering this "opportunity," even when they can profit from it, the Forest Service should ask why. It's probably because OHV use is very destructive. If private landowners don't want OHVs on their lands, then the forests should think long and hard about how much this use is then appropriate for public land. (Preservation/Conservation, Missoula, MT - #488)

## **PC #: 375**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should not use ROS as a basis for determining**

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## **recreation use.**

Sample Statement:

We recommend the Revision Team abandon the use of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classifications and come up with something more meaningful and trustworthy. Continued use of ROS only promises more debate and conflict over where different types of uses are legally allowed, especially in terms of motorized use. (Preservation/Conservation, Kalispell, MT - #544)

Sample Statement:

Recreational Opportunity Spectrum Class (ROS) is proposed as a tool to guide management and references certain categories without disclosing the recreational implications of those terms. More qualification is needed in the discussion on increasing day use activities and dispersed recreation. The Rattlesnake National Recreation area has specific legislated goals established and requires additional management direction. Also, designated wild and scenic river corridors, research national areas, botanical areas, etc. - need additional consideration of intensity and amount of recreation that should occur in each area. (Preservation/Conservation, Missoula, MT - #624)

## **PC #: 417**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should limit motorized use to 4 stroke engines.**

Sample Statement:

Equipment restrictions should be put in place to ensure that air and water pollution is reduced and minimized. Snowmobiles should be restricted to only those with the new four-stroke motors meeting the stringent requirements (for example the Yellowstone Winter Use Plan). Likewise, all OHV and personal watercraft should also be restricted to the more efficient four-stroke engines. It is appropriate for the Forests to define a stepped implementation of this requirement, but it must be limited to a specific minimal period of time (of less than ten years), and it must not be allowed to slip. (Individual, Minneapolis, MN - #532)

## **PC #: 418**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should look to already roaded lands for additional motorized opportunities.**

Sample Statement:

Similarly, areas should be designated for semi-primitive motorized use. Within these areas, PMRVs [personal motorized off-road vehicles] should be restricted to marked routes. These semi-primitive motorized routes should be chosen and designed with the primary use being for PMRVs. Maintenance levels would be slightly higher. Monitoring and enforcement in these areas would be more costly. These motorized PMRV areas and routes should be placed in areas of the Forest that are currently highly roaded areas. Many old logging roads could be partially reclaimed for this use. Within the semi-primitive, motorized areas site specific analysis should be made to determine appropriateness and need for routes. Existing redundant routes and routes in key wildlife habitats and riparian areas should not be legitimized. All legal routes should be identified clearly for travel. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #536)

Sample Statement:

.Look at connecting existing single track trails with roads that are closed but motorcycles are allowed on to create more opportunities and more miles of trails. The road base and trail is already there. Lets use what is already in place so we don't have to disturb dirt to build new trails and cause fancy environmental studies to take place before work begins.7.Quad/4 wheeler specific trails or re-open some closed roads for 4 wheeler use with 52" gate openings with loop opportunities in mind. 8.Availability of trails for disabled hunters.9.Opening a larger area for OHV use could result in less environmental impact of a specific area, less use of a specific area and it could be done on a test basis to see how it works. (Recreational, Whitefish, MT - #966)

## **PC #: 419**

### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should also consider the needs of 4x4 jeep type users in addition to OHVs.**

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F1-A1: (We propose to identify areas with the highest potential for OHV motorized use. Actual changes to existing designated routes would not occur until after future site-specific project level analysis was completed.)\*AM-F1-A1 I agree with the 'need' to identify areas with the highest potential for OHV motorized use. For clarification, it appears to me that Bitterroot Forest Managers have excluded Four Wheel Drive (Jeep) type vehicles from consideration and have focused on trail development for ATV and Motorcycle users. I propose that most motorized trail systems can be modified to include 4x4 jeep type (short wheelbase) vehicles. As I mentioned in our group meetings, I will be more than happy to address my four wheel drive club about adopting a trail for trail cleanup, maintenance, and trail funding. (Place Based Groups, Victor, MT - #560)

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### **PC #: 413**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should not allow motorized use on user created routes.**

Sample Statement:

Motorized use is permitted only on current system roads and trails open to such use. User-created routes excluded until site-specific NEPA is done that determines a route can handle motor use, that such use will not harm other resources, and will not conflict with quiet users. (Individual, Stevensville, MT - #195)

Sample Statement:

I feel agree that user built trails have become a problem and these should not be recognized as forest routes and there needs to be some control on this practice. All single-track motorized users and snowmobile users should not be banned from areas where four-wheeled OHV use causes a problem. I have attended Forest Service meetings and it is clear that the primary concern on access problems relating to recreation is 4 wheeled ATV/hunter use where user made trails and cross country travel have caused noticeable damage in the forest. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #518)

Sample Statement:

Similarly, MNPS urges the Forest Service to curtail off-road vehicle use and prevent the unauthorized creation of de facto roads by off-road vehicles. (Supporting citations included in original letter #123) (Preservation/Conservation, Missoula, MT - #123)

### **PC #: 420**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should limited motorized trails to those that can be maintained.**

Sample Statement:

Reviewed draft forest recreation area maps- One comment that OHV trails in roadless is big red flag for environmental community. Imperative that OHV trails be monitored and maintained to avoid excessive adverse environmental effects. It is incumbent on the FS to maintain those roads/trails (Place Based Groups, Hamilton, MT - #827)

Sample Statement:

There should only be as many miles of OHV use roads as there is funding for maintenance and enforcement. There should be no OHV travel in roadless areas or wilderness study areas. (Individual, Stevensville, MT - #364)

### **PC #: 421**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should have more consistent motorized rules across each forest.**

Sample Statement:

Create consistent motorized recreation rules across each Forest (Preservation/Conservation, Missoula, MT - #527)

### **PC #: 412**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should look to private landowners to supply opportunities for developed OHV use.**

Sample Statement:

AM-F1. The finding needs to emphasize that the demand for non-motorized access is increasing, not just the demand for motorized access. Both motorized and non-motorized activities should be mentioned in the finding. The last sentence "While OHV use has increased, the amount of motorized trails for OHV use has not kept up with the demand" should be changed to emphasize that OHVs should not be allowed on trails. The Forest needs to consider that there is the option that private lands be commercially developed for meeting the demand of OHV users. The potential for commercially run private lands may have several advantages relative to putting areas or routes on the forest. The Forest should not compete with this private opportunity. Routes may be designated for OHVs, but "play areas" where OHVs can go anywhere they desire is not currently being considered. The group repeatedly supported this concept. Action AM-F1-A1 Because the funding for trails is less than it has been, it is very concerning that the FS is considering establishing more trails for motorized users. These new trails could take considerable amounts of money to build and maintain, reduce the funding available for the existing trail system. Funding for enforcing the OHV restrictions needs to be ensured. Current funding is far below what is needed. Signs are critical to ensuring cooperation among users. There is some incompatibility between snowmobiles and cross-country skiers; perhaps skiers should not use established snowmobile routes. There is concern that the site-specific analysis that is mentioned in this action would not get accomplish[ed]... (Place Based Groups, Stevensville, MT - #823)

Sample Statement:

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Action AM-FI-AI(We propose to identify areas with the highest potential for OHV motorized use. Actual changes to existing designated routes would not occur until after future site-specific project level analysis was completed.)The premise of this action is based on faulty assumptions that there is an obligation by land managing agencies to accommodate vehicles sold for the sole purpose of recreation that leave designed roads, conflict with wildlife and non-motorized uses, spread weeds, and have demonstrated the inability of the agency to keep such vehicles on routes so designated for their use. Promises to stay on designated routes may have been real for a few but most soon left such routes damaging resources for a much larger area. There is little money for Forest Service recreation management reaching the ground, yet this plan revision is proposing to create vastly more demand for recreation administrative funds without any assurance that funding for such administration is forthcoming. What other recreation uses will be abandoned to provide administrative monies for this new administrative burden Would it not be prudent to leave such highly impactful uses with intense administrative demands to private lands? (Individual, No Address - #53)

### **PC #: 422**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service does not need to remedy inconsistencies across jurisdictional boundaries.**

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F2-A3 (We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas.): The Flathead and Lolo Snowmobile Amendments cited are more examples of the illegal revision of Forest Plans through cumulative significant amendments improperly portrayed to the public as insignificant. As we discussed under the Finding F-2 above carrying illegal amendments into the revision will not stand and there is no need or requirement to "remedy inconsistencies across jurisdictional boundaries." (Multiple Use or Land Rights, Bigfork, MT - #588)

### **PC #: 409**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should continue recent snowmobile decisions.**

Sample Statement:

The snow mobile-wilderness advocate's agreement for winterized use in the area was a great example of cooperation to the benefit of both groups. I hate to see this agreement changed to allow more snowmobiling. (Individual, Condon, MT - #352)

Sample Statement:

Is it possible to add an amendment to M.A. 12 to allow snowmobile use? If not, Action AM-F2-A3 (We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas.) is a proposal I am for. (Individual, Superior, MT - #483)

Sample Statement:

Maintain the Flathead Snowmobile Accord that was agreed upon by the Montana Snowmobile Association and the Montana Wilderness Association. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #626)

### **PC #: 710**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service needs to continue recently developed snowmobile direction and establish parameters on shoulder season use.**

Sample Statement:

AM-F2-A3(We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas.) Suggestion to establish parameters on "shoulder" season use (low snow conditions in low elevations where needed to access higher/better snow conditions) (Place Based Groups, Stevensville, MT - #823)

Sample Statement:

We wish to see snowmobiling continue on Flathead National Forest. In order to assure future access for snowmobilers there should be no net loss of designated trail or play areas for snowmobiling. If trails or areas must be closed for any reason, they will be re-opened by cutting or be replaced by other areas or trails of equal size and value in the same general area for the snowmobiling recreational experience. This only applies to designated trails or areas. Ben T said, "If certain trails are open with X-amount of use, it may not be harmful. But if traffic goes up 3 times, that might need to be cut back. "Ward said he understands that you may want to keep what you have, but he wonders if maybe you should have less. Kerry said the statement was too general. Jeff Clausen noted that if you constrict use more and more, wouldn't it create over-use. Ben T

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noted that as population and use grows, you'll run out of wilderness-type areas. 15 snow cats up one trail is one thing, but 5000 is another issue. Changes for the purpose of consistency across forests should not reduce the amount or quality of snowmobile access on each forest. Kerry said to talk about future conditions, and remember the value of wildlands. Ben expressed concern about over-usage. Eric Hosek said there cannot be over-weighting of a user group, whether motorized or whatever. Ward said the Flathead Valley has an exploding population, and we'll be overwhelmed, with wilderness becoming more and more valuable, where quiet solitude will be even more valuable in the future. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #968)

**PC #: 411**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should favor snowmobile use including those areas proposed for wilderness.**

Sample Statement:

Dispersed Recreation - Increased Impact Reducing the size of the snowmobile riding area in Swan Lake would have a negative impact on the areas left available. For example... prior to the closing of Peter's Ridge the Six Mile area on an average weekend day would see 10-20 snowmobilers in this area. Since the temporary closure of Peter's Ridge the use has increased to 100-150 snowmobilers in this same area in a weekend day. Increased traffic in the Six Mile area has moved more snowmobilers into the Lost Creek and Soup Creek drainages. With the "wilderness study" areas south of Inspiration Pass being enforced this next winter, it would be reasonable to anticipate a notable increase in users from Condon, Salmon Prairie and the entire Swan Valley -a lot of people has been using the "wilderness study area" in the Swan Range, not knowing that it was closed. The idea of purposely funneling this much activity into such a small area is absurd and in no way follows the guidelines set forth in the Forest Plan. User Conflict Your proposed amendment would displace the higher elevation snowmobilers into the valley bottom where conflict with skiers and snowshoers is inevitable. The Laughing Horse Lodge in Swan Lake actively promotes XC skiing in our community and in the past several years the activity level of XC skiing has increased. A realistic picture will find conflict as skiers, snowshoers and snowmobilers are forced into using the same trails and play areas - no one will have an enjoyable outdoor experience! This amendment is just not acceptable. (Individual, Bigfork, MT - #356)

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F2-A3: (We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas.) Under access management AM-F2-A3 "snowmobile use only". I would like to see these areas opened back up for snowmobile use in the Hoodoo Pass-Great Burn area. A half mile corridor on State Line Trail #738 through these areas: 1. Little Phoebe-Lightning Peak-Upper part of Fletcher Basin 2. Heart Lake Trail #1713. Heart Lake 4. Pearl Lake 5. Dalton Lake 6. Upper Trio Lake 7. State Line Trail 3738 to Goose Lake and above Steep Lakes. Fish Creed-Surveyor Creek-Corridor 1. State Line Trail #738 from Mud Lake to upper end of Cache Creek, Shale Mtn. 2. Upper Cedar Log Lake 3. Irish Basin 4. Schley Mt. (Individual, Superior, MT - #426)

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F2-A3: (We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas). Snowmobile Clubs operate under Cost-share Agreements with all three Forests covered by this Proposed Action to groom trails in cooperation with the Forests, and this partnership should be nurtured through continued support for snowmobiling on the three Forests. We recommend that any changes should be made to FAVOR snowmobiling, rather than RESTRICT snowmobiling. Historically, Forest actions have tended to cut back motorized use. We urge you to make any changes that are made "to remedy inconsistencies across jurisdictional boundaries" in such a way that management direction matches the jurisdiction that is the most favorable to snowmobiling, rather than the opposite. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #489)

Sample Statement:

We do not believe that the act of snowmobiling (i.e., winter motorized use) does anything which degrades the wilderness characteristics and attributes of an area, nor does snowmobiling in any way preclude future designation as wilderness by Congress. Once the snow is gone, there is no remaining evidence of snowmobile use. The reality is, snowmobiling has done nothing to detract from the potential for wilderness designation, so the Forests should continue to allow snowmobiling in management areas recommended for wilderness until such time as Congress makes decisions on additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System. If the Forests' desire is to retain areas recommended for wilderness in essentially the condition they currently are in, an acceptable alternative would be to designate these areas as semi-primitive, with winter motorized use allowed. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #489)

**PC #: 261**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should provide additional snowmobile use opportunities on the Swan Lake Ranger District.**

Sample Statement:

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Recommended Action: i. Reopen Bond Creek, North and South Lost Creek and Soup Creek to snowmobiling from mid- to high elevation. ii. Approve a Swan Lake Ski Touring Area. iii. Work with Swan Lake Recreation Coalition in the development of a benchmark USFS project - the Swan Valley USFS Recreation Corridor. The community of Swan Lake and the Swan Lake Nordic club will take responsibility for maintaining and marketing the Recreation corridor for the benefit of our community and our visitors. (Recreational, Bigfork, MT - #557)

### **PC #: 410**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should provide greater limitations on snowmobile use.**

Sample Statement:

We urge that snowmobiling be reexamined during Revision in order to appropriately revisit access management on the landscape. In particular, we note there are areas dosed at least seasonally to motorized use on the Flathead, such as Krause Basin and Jewel Basin, where motorized violations have nonetheless continued on a regular basis. Moreover, in Krause Basin, an illegally cut snowmobile trail resulted in the first significant use of the Basin by snowmobiles. This was not rectified until the trail was reclaimed under court order in 1999. Snowmobile use has since essentially disappeared from all of Krause Basin once again. The answer lies in drawing the law enforcement point back to the road, rather than leaving it in the remote backcountry. (Preservation/Conservation, Kalispell, MT - #544)

Sample Statement:

It is thereby recommended that winter motorized use be strictly eliminated from and near Elk wintering areas in the Bitterroot National Forest. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #230)

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F2-A3: (We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas.) In regard to Action AM-F2-A3 and snowmobile use, we have no suggested changes to the wording of this Action, but recommend that management direction recognize that snowmobile use is increasing, and that in some circumstances adverse air quality impacts as well as user conflicts and negative recreational experiences may result. (Federal Agency or Official, Helena, MT - #257)

### **PC #: 711**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service needs to assure there is no net loss of snowmobile trails/play areas and that closed areas are replaced by substitution or reopening of other closed areas.**

Sample Statement:

AM-F2-A3(We propose to continue recently developed snowmobile direction such as Flathead NF Amendment #24 (Winter Motorized Recreation, preferred alternative) and Lolo NF Amendment #29 (Management Area 11 Snowmobile Use Areas). Current forest snowmobile management would continue, however, there would be changes in some areas.) Suggestion to establish parameters on "shoulder" season use (low snow conditions in low elevations where needed to access higher/better snow conditions) (Place Based Groups, Stevensville, MT - #823)

Sample Statement:

We wish to see snowmobiling continue on Flathead National Forest. In order to assure future access for snowmobilers there should be no net loss of designated trail or play areas for snowmobiling. If trails or areas must be closed for any reason, they will be re-opened by cutting or be replaced by other areas or trails of equal size and value in the same general area for the snowmobiling recreational experience. This only applies to designated trails or areas. Ben T said, "If certain trails are open with X-amount of use, it may not be harmful. But if traffic goes up 3 times, that might need to be cut back. "Ward said he understands that you may want to keep what you have, but he wonders if maybe you should have less. Kerry said the statement was too general. Jeff Clausen noted that if you constrict use more and more, wouldn't it create over-use. Ben T noted that as population and use grows, you'll run out of wilderness-type areas. 15 snow cats up one trail is one thing, but 5000 is another issue. Changes for the purpose of consistency across forests should not reduce the amount or quality of snowmobile access on each forest. Kerry said to talk about future conditions, and remember the value of wildlands. Ben expressed concern about over-usage. Eric Hosek said there cannot be over-weighting of a user group, whether motorized or whatever. Ward said the Flathead Valley has an exploding population, and we'll be overwhelmed, with wilderness becoming more and more valuable, where quiet solitude will be even more valuable in the future. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #968)

### **PC #: 712**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service needs to refrain from reducing the amount and quality of snowmobile access for the sake of consistency across forest lines.**

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### Sample Statement:

We wish to see snowmobiling continue on Flathead National Forest. In order to assure future access for snowmobilers there should be no net loss of designated trail or play areas for snowmobiling. If trails or areas must be closed for any reason, they will be re-opened by cutting or be replaced by other areas or trails of equal size and value in the same general area for the snowmobiling recreational experience. This only applies to designated trails or areas. Ben T said, "If certain trails are open with X-amount of use, it may not be harmful. But if traffic goes up 3 times, that might need to be cut back." Ward said he understands that you may want to keep what you have, but he wonders if maybe you should have less. Kerry said the statement was too general. Jeff Clausen noted that if you constrict use more and more, wouldn't it create over-use. Ben T noted that as population and use grows, you'll run out of wilderness-type areas. 15 snow cats up one trail is one thing, but 5000 is another issue. Changes for the purpose of consistency across forests should not reduce the amount or quality of snowmobile access on each forest. Kerry said to talk about future conditions, and remember the value of wildlands. Ben expressed concern about over-usage. Eric Hosek said there cannot be over-weighting of a user group, whether motorized or whatever. Ward said the Flathead Valley has an exploding population, and we'll be overwhelmed, with wilderness becoming more and more valuable, where quiet solitude will be even more valuable in the future. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #968)

### **PC #: 714**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service needs to prohibit mechanized travel in RARE areas, IRA's and un-roaded areas that are currently not part of the inventory.**

### Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1: We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel. COMMENT: We would be in agreement with limiting bicycles (mechanized) use to designated routes and to prohibit cross-country travel. In addition, it is recommended that there be no mechanized travel within the following: 1. Wilderness Study Areas. 2. Roadless Area Review and Evaluation RARE areas identified in LRMP Appendix C road less inventories. 3. Inventoried Roadless Areas. 4. Unroaded, those areas not currently inventoried that have the potential to be placed in category 1 or 2 above. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #230)

### **PC #: 713**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service needs to establish party size limits to designated mountain bike travel routes or areas.**

### Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1: (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.) Propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes & prohibit cross-country bike travel. I would add to this some approach to group size limit. Camping for large groups can do damage to small roadside camping spots. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #107)

### **PC #: 423**

#### **Public Concern: The Forest Service should have a group size limit for camping.**

### Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1: (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.) Propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes & prohibit cross-country bike travel. I would add to this some approach to group size limit. Camping for large groups can do damage to small roadside camping spots. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #107)

### **PC #: 837**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should prohibit cross country travel, emphasize enforcement and keep mountain bikes on designated routes that take advantage of existing trails and roads**

### Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1: (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.) Regarding Action: AM-F4, You should also consider: Not just stating that routes shall be designated, as it's not merely a good idea to have designated routes, but that routes "shall be designated" and there shall in fact be created designated routes. These routes shall preferably be encouraged or allowed upon or within currently used routes such as existing cross-county ski trails, former logging roads and other existing roads. (Business, Essex, MT - #569)



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**PC #: 836**

**Public Concern: The forest service should consult with local and national mountain bike clubs on designated trails and systems.**

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1: (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.)AM-F4-A1: Agree. See AN-F4. Also, recommend consultation with any local or National Mtn. Bike Clubs or Organizations. (Place Based Groups, Victor, MT - #560)

**PC #: 717**

**Public Concern: The forest service needs to identify and encourage mountain bike travel in appropriate areas with high potential for designated trails and cross country travel**

Sample Statement:

Final y, LIMB urges the Lolo, Bitterroot and Flathead national forests to identify, new areas with high potential for future' mountain bike trails. Appropriate areas for responsible free riding could greatly reduce the illegal construction of free ride trails. (Recreational, Missoula, MT - #522)

Sample Statement:

Isn't it a wonderful thing that mountain bikes have grown in popularity and Americans are using them to experience the National Forests? User conflicts and a very small amount of resource damage is occurring, but at levels that are below acceptable levels. Bicycle travel should be encouraged, promoted further developed. I disagree with the proposal to limit travel to designated routes: Mountain bikes should be allowed cross country travel, especially for scenic viewing, hunting or to assist in removing legally harvested game and wildlife. Also, wheel carts should be allowed for assisting hunters in removing legally harvested big game. (Individual, Dickinson, ND - #535)

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1 (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.):...the proposal to limit bicycles to designated routes is a violation of NFMA and MUSYA, is not a major public issue, should not affect formulation of alternative land uses, and is not supported by credible data and inventories. (Multiple Use or Land Rights, Bigfork, MT - #588)

**PC #: 715**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not restrict mountain bike users if they don't restrict hikers and restriction should only apply to areas where problems exist.**

Sample Statement:

In regards to your forest plan and limiting bikes to trails because of erosion and conflicts. I've seen a lot of erosion from badly design trails. I have seen much user conflict but if you mention it in a report you can get people to agree. Also bikers do go off trail. We did a ride over in Butte (some guys 2 or 3 times a year). It was over the east ridge and you carried your bike for over an hour. Part of the fun. You also have hunters using bikes to get game out. They won't be on trails. If you don't restrict the hikers-don't restrict the bikers. (Individual, No Address - #253)

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1: (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.)The Plan recognizes that mountain bicycle problems only exist or are significant only in some isolated areas. It really should not be restricted except locally where problems have developed. (Place Based Groups, Paradise, MT - #258)

**PC #: 834**

**Public Concern: The forest service should allow wheel carts for the removal of game animals.(Wheeled carts)**

Sample Statement:

Isn't it a wonderful thing that mountain bikes have grown in popularity and Americans are using them to experience the National Forests? User conflicts and a very small amount of resource damage is occurring, but at levels that are below acceptable levels. Bicycle travel should be encouraged, promoted further developed. I disagree with the proposal to limit travel to designated routes: Mountain bikes should be allowed cross country travel, especially for scenic viewing, hunting or

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to assist in removing legally harvested game and wildlife. Also, wheel carts should be allowed for assisting hunters in removing legally harvested big game. (Individual, Dickinson, ND - #535)

### **PC #: 835**

**Public Concern: The forest service should provide dual use on some trails (hikers and mountain bikers) and separate conflicting uses on others (horses and motorized use).**

Sample Statement:

AM-F4: Mountain bike recreation and exercise is here to stay and is a wonderful sport and activity. Therefore designated routes must be developed and shared with other users. I would propose that mountain bike and hiking trails (quiet activities) share trail systems as is allowed/appropriate. I am in agreement with concerns voiced by equestrian trail users and the conflicts they have had on trails with mountain bikers doing gravity descents where they can come flying around blind turns and spook horse and mule trains. This is dangerous and easily solved by limiting mountain bike activities on "some" trails that are reserved mostly for hikers rather than equestrians. (Place Based Groups, Victor, MT - #560)

Sample Statement:

[Action AM-F4-A1: (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.)]  
Action AM-F4-AI: We commend the National Forests for recognizing that mountain bike use may be resulting in resources damage and user conflicts. We agree that cross-country travel should be prohibited and limited to designated routes. We would also encourage the forest to consider reviewing existing trails and determining that some existing routes should be limited to foot travel or horse traffic only. (Preservation/Conservation, Missoula, MT - #566)

### **PC #: 718**

**Public Concern: The forest service needs to allow mountain bikes to travel cross country throughout the forest.**

Sample Statement:

Isn't it a wonderful thing that mountain bikes have grown in popularity and Americans are using them to experience the National Forests? User conflicts and a very small amount of resource damage is occurring, but at levels that are below acceptable levels. Bicycle travel should be encouraged, promoted further developed. I disagree with the proposal to limit travel to designated routes: Mountain bikes should be allowed cross country travel, especially for scenic viewing, hunting or to assist in removing legally harvested game and wildlife. Also, wheel carts should be allowed for assisting hunters in removing legally harvested big game. (Individual, Dickinson, ND - #535)

### **PC #: 838**

**Public Concern: The forest service should recognize the growing demand for low elevation trails and trail heads, identifying areas near communities, with high potential for quiet recreation that is segregated from motorized use areas**

Sample Statement:

Our National Forests have lost many miles of low elevation, traditionally quiet non motorized trails in the past forest plans. The Forest Service should restore this recreational resource particularly in areas near communities and enforce the non motorized restrictions I see being violated in the area of the North Fork. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #247)

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F1-A1: (We propose to identify areas with the highest potential for OHV motorized use. Actual changes to existing designated routes would not occur until after future site-specific project level analysis was completed.)  
New Finding AM-FI: Demand for traditional, quiet, non-motorized recreation has increased dramatically over the life of the current forest plans. This demand is expected to grow as the Flathead valley population grows and citizens seek refuge from urbanization, congestion, and the ubiquitous internal combustion engine. The public will demand areas of quiet solitude that are easily accessible from low-elevation, major highway routes, as well as trail heads at higher elevations along forest roads.  
New Action AM-FI-AI: We propose to identify areas and trail heads with the highest potential for traditional, quiet, non-motorized recreation. These areas will be identified in the context of the total access management situation on each forest, but will emphasize increasing the availability of this resource and the segregation of this resource from motorized recreation. (Preservation/Conservation, Kalispell, MT - #256)

Sample Statement:

There is more demand for quiet trails especially at low elevation and near towns. Access to these trails and areas should be maintained and it is important that they be non-motorized. (Individual, Whitefish, MT - #481)

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Sample Statement:

Past forest plans have already given away many miles of low-elevation, traditionally quiet, non-motorized trails. The Forest Service should act to restore this recreational resource. It benefits hikers like us, but more importantly, it provides secure areas for wildlife. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #529)

**PC #: 716**

**Public Concern: The forest service needs to allow mountain bike use on National Forests on equal basis as horse use.**

Sample Statement:

Many Forest Service personnel treat bicycles the same as they would motorcycles. The development of the modern mountain bike has opened the trail system to many people such as myself who enjoy the outdoors, cannot afford horse-packed trips, and are unable to hike very far given our bad knees and hips. Bicycles have less impact than horses in terms of trail degradation and spread of exotic seeds. They should be allowed on the trail system on an equal basis with equestrians, with rules that ensure pedestrian use has the right-of-way. While there will obviously be conflicts between horses and bicycles, these should be resolved, rather than banning bicycles. A proposal banning horses from the trail system would never get anywhere, so why do it to bicycles? I realize the equestrian lobby is powerful, but it's time to address this multiple use question responsibly, and work bicycles into the equation. (Individual, No Address - #372)

**PC #: 840**

**Public Concern: The forest service should place more emphasis on the restriction of hikers in areas where wildlife disturbance is a concern and refrain from only using disturbance to wildlife by motorized use to justify area closures.**

Sample Statement:

A study of National Park elk habituated to human activity and not hunted were more sensitive to persons afoot than vehicles (Shultz, R.D. and James A. Bailey "Responses of National Park Elk to Human Activity", Journal of Wildlife Management, v42, 1975)...hikers disturb elk more than motor vehicles and "disturbance of wildlife" should not be used as a reason to justify motorized recreation and access closures. Additionally, when there are concerns with wildlife disturbance, restrictions on hikers should be given a greater emphasis than restrictions on motorized visitors. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

**PC #: 842**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not allow the Wilderness to be a drive through entertainment center.**

Sample Statement:

Please do not allow the wilderness to be a drive thru entertainment center. Wildlife have a right to be left alone. (Individual, Plains, MT - #388)

**PC #: 841**

**Public Concern: The forest service should maintain the quality of non-motorized recreation experiences by restricting the expansion of OHV activities to disturbed areas with infrequent wildlife use. Maintain current and proposed use on designated routes or existing system roads outside roadless areas and proposed wilderness with stricter enforcement and more education of travel restrictions. Develop standards to help prevent erosion, suppression of native vegetation regeneration and protect the remaining non-motorized areas.**

Sample Statement:

Motorized travel in wild areas needs to be restricted to approved routes and enforced. (Individual, Kalispell, MT - #468)

Sample Statement:

Finding AM-F1 fails to acknowledge that non-motorized use is also growing rapidly. Motorized users take far more space and create far more impacts than non-motorized users. The National Forests and America's land mass in general is overwhelmingly dominated by motorized use. Motorized use in the National Forests should be limited to system roads, as is the policy on Montana state lands. (Individual, Darby, MT - #582)

Sample Statement:

I urge you to spell out a forest-wide standard to protect and manage remaining Lolo N.F. trails for traditional non-motorized uses. Please retain the existing plan's statement, "There shall be no motorized use" and apply it to all roadless areas and all proposed wilderness within the Lolo N.F. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #607)

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Sample Statement:

I understand you are reviewing trails in the Flathead NF. I would like to strongly encourage you to manage both the Alpine Trail #7 and the Smokey Divide Trail (#26 & 27) as non-motorized trails. These areas are critical wildlife corridors, in habitats that are being bombarded by non-native practices. I believe some roads should be open to ORV's but they must be contained to places that the land has been disturbed and the wildlife doesn't frequent. (Individual, Kila, MT - #776)

**PC #: 839**

**Public Concern: The forest service should develop or retain existing standards that ban or limit motorized use to designated roads and trails and manage system trails primarily for traditional foot and stock use while restoring historic trails where possible.**

Sample Statement:

A forest wide standard is necessary to protect and manage remaining forest trails for traditional non-motorized uses. Keep motorized vehicles on roads where they belong. The damaged sections of the 100 mile long Sapphire Crest Trail, a Montana Heritage Trail, need to be restored and kept free of off-road vehicle traffic. I have hiked, camped, fished and hunted in most of the above areas and value them for their solitude, beauty and peacefulness. They should be kept wild for future generations to enjoy. (Individual, Victor, MT - #325)

Sample Statement:

We favor retaining the existing standards that ban motorized use, leaving forest trails for hiking, skiing, snow shoeing, horseback riding and other forms of traditional non-motorized use, as long as the trails are not eroded or degraded by that use. (Individual, Arlee, MT - #335)

Sample Statement:

We appreciate the cooperative relationship of the Seeley District in providing winter access to quiet trails for snowshoers and skiers to the Monture Creek trailhead. We would encourage the district, to manage trails for traditional foot and stock uses and restore historic trails where possible. (Preservation/Conservation, Helena, MT - #526)

**PC #: 719**

**Public Concern: The forest service should consider additional Alpine/Nordic areas at higher elevations with better snow coverage and longer seasons to help support new jobs in communities on the Bitterroot and Lolo.**

Sample Statement:

The Missoula Nordic Ski Club does an excellent job of providing groomed trails in the Pattee Canyon and Rattlesnake area, but due to the elevation and weather patterns in these areas the ski season can be sporadic and relatively short. Another groomed Alpine/Nordic ski area at a higher elevation with better snow coverage and a longer season would be a tremendous boost to interest and participation in Nordic skiing as well as a boost to the local economy. We would encourage you to consider any plans for such an area in the Bitterroot and Lolo National Forests. (Business, Missoula, MT - #422)

Sample Statement:

Missoula and western Montana need more jobs that are not hard on the land and I can't think of anything cleaner than a ski area for a major new source of jobs. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #504)

**PC #: 721**

**Public Concern: The forest service should make available additional handicap access and designate handicap hunting areas.**

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F3-A1: (We propose to continue the overall trend of decreasing the amount of roads within the National Forest transportation system to a level that can be maintained, while ensuring adequate access for both motorized and non-motorized use. Roads Analysis would provide a basis for managers to conduct a future, more detailed and site-specific analysis related to the transportation system.) Access to higher elevation blue grouse habitat must be maintained over a wide area to give access for this highly sought-after fall hunting experience so that it can be enjoyed by those of us physically unable to hike into these areas. Additional handicap access and hunting areas should be designated. (Place Based Groups, Paradise, MT - #258)

**PC #: 720**

**Public Concern: The forest service should maintain access to high elevation blue grouse habitat over a broad area to accommodate handicap individuals.**

Sample Statement:

Action AM-F3-A1: (We propose to continue the overall trend of decreasing the amount of roads within the National Forest transportation system to a level that can be maintained, while ensuring adequate access for both motorized and non-motorized use. Roads Analysis would provide a basis for managers to conduct a future, more detailed and site-specific analysis related to the transportation system.) Access to higher elevation blue grouse habitat must be maintained over a wide area to give access for this highly sought-after fall hunting experience so that it can be enjoyed by those of us physically unable to hike into these areas. Additional handicap access and hunting areas should be designated. (Place Based Groups, Paradise, MT - #258)

**PC #: 722**

**Public Concern: The forest service should maintain access to dispersed campsites.**

Sample Statement:

There is a shortage of dispersed camping areas along all of our motorized routes...In order to meet the needs of the public, camps spots and access to them must not be closed because of access and/or sanitation concerns. There are ways to mitigate any access concerns. Sanitation concerns can be addressed by constructing vault toilets or limiting camping to self-contained camping units which are the most popular means of camping now. Additionally, non-self-contained campers can be required to pack wastes out by using porta-potties or similar devices. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

**PC #: 264**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should allow time extensions for hunting camps during hunting season.**

Sample Statement:

Other elk hunters and myself want the same consideration that you have given to the mushroom pickers and rock hunters and that is the ability to obtain an extended days permit during the hunting season. The permit system could be administered like the mushroom pickers with a fee schedule and a permit fee. I have noticed numerous times in the local newspapers the amount of money being collected by the local USFS for firewood cutting and Christmas tree cutting. The money collected for the hunting camp permits would be another revenue source for the USFS. (Individual, Stevensville, MT - #472)

**PC #: 723**

**Public Concern: The forest service should require dispersed campers to pack their own waste.**

Sample Statement:

There is a shortage of dispersed camping areas along all of our motorized routes...In order to meet the needs of the public, camps spots and access to them must not be closed because of access and/or sanitation concerns. There are ways to mitigate any access concerns. Sanitation concerns can be addressed by constructing vault toilets or limiting camping to self-contained camping units which are the most popular means of camping now. Additionally, non-self-contained campers can be required to pack wastes out by using porta-potties or similar devices. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

**PC #: 725**

**Public Concern: The forest service should maintain historical trail access where it occurred at the time of designation.**

Sample Statement:

The Bitter Root Backcountry Horsemen must insist that: 1. Recreational and saddle stock be accommodated within each wilderness, and within each portion of that wilderness, where it historically existed when the area became a wilderness. 2. Historical trail access be maintained to the level and character that existed when the area was designated. 3. Restrictions imposed on recreational and pack stock be at a minimum necessary to preserve the character and public purposes as required in section 4c of the Act. ACTION (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #230)

**PC #: 728**

**Public Concern: The forest service should impose tighter restrictions on horse**

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### **feed in the back country to prevent weeds.**

Sample Statement:

Tighter restrictions on horse feed and travel should be enforced in the back country to prevent more weed problems. (Individual, Helena, MT - #684)

### **PC #: 724**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should clearly state support for historical use and grazing of pack and saddle stock within wilderness and general forest areas as a legitimated use of the National Forest.**

Sample Statement:

The Flathead Back Country Horsemen would like to see a section included in the Flathead Forest Plan that would clearly state that the use of recreational pack and saddle stock is a historical and legitimate use of the Forest. (Recreational, Columbia Falls, MT - #43)

Sample Statement:

The Bitter Root Backcountry Horsemen must insist that: 1. Recreational and saddle stock be accommodated within each wilderness, and within each portion of that wilderness, where it historically existed when the area became a wilderness. 2. Historical trail access be maintained to the level and character that existed when the area was designated. 3. Restrictions imposed on recreational and pack stock be at a minimum necessary to preserve the character and public purposes as required in section 4c of the Act. ACTION (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #230)

Sample Statement:

In order to ensure the opportunity for extended pack trips, recreational grazing of pack and saddle stock must be allowed. Grazing conditions need to be monitored regularly so that any problems can be addressed before LAC standards are exceeded. (Recreational, Columbia Falls, MT - #155)

Sample Statement:

The Flathead Back Country Horsemen would like to see a section in the Flathead Forest Plan that clearly states that the use of recreational pack and saddle stock is a historical and legitimate use of the Forest. (Recreational, Columbia Falls, MT - #155)

### **PC #: 726**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should replace or construct new trailheads when road closures eliminate current access and assure that new trailheads have adequate connector trails, turnarounds and equal or greater number of parking areas to accommodate truck/four horse trailer units.**

Sample Statement:

If trailheads are relocated or reconstructed, the new trailhead will have an adequate turnaround area and an equal or greater number of horse trailer parking spaces that accommodate truck/four- horse trailer units. If roads which lead to trailheads are gated, a replacement trailhead will be constructed, and a connecting trail to the old trailhead will be maintained for stock use. (Recreational, Columbia Falls, MT - #43)

### **PC #: 727**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should impose only the minimal restrictions necessary on pack and saddle use to preserve the character and public purpose required by law**

Sample Statement:

The Bitter Root Backcountry Horsemen must insist that: 1. Recreational and saddle stock be accommodated within each wilderness, and within each portion of that wilderness, where it historically existed when the area became a wilderness. 2. Historical trail access be maintained to the level and character that existed when the area was designated. 3. Restrictions imposed on recreational and pack stock be at a minimum necessary to preserve the character and public purposes as required in section 4c of the Act. ACTION (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #230)

### **PC #: 734**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should maintain campgrounds a in as rustic a fashion as possible keeping their current size.**

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## Sample Statement:

I would hope that in the recreation field that things could be left as rustic as possible. We have taken far too many quaint, rustic campgrounds, trailheads, day use areas, etc. and turned them into larger, more sterile facilities that have lost a lot of the charm and rustic appeal that they once had. The quality of experience has lessened in my opinion. Go back to using more log work, native stone, rough lumber, etc. Don't build mega facilities to accommodate more and more of the motorized crowds. The National Forests do not need to be urbanized. The National Forests need to offer a respite from that sort of lifestyle. (Individual, Condon, MT - #477)

## Sample Statement:

Developed recreation sites should be maintained and improved, not enlarged. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #659)

## **PC #: 747**

### **Public Concern: The forest service should count day hunting trips from trailheads as reported use days.**

#### Sample Statement:

Outfitter parties riding clear into the national forests from the trail heads to hunt opening day. Anytime we compete against these clients it should be counted as a day use. (Individual, No Address - #205)

## **PC #: 733**

### **Public Concern: The forest service should retain and improve recreational facilities in interface areas to accommodate quiet recreation demand and motorized access only where appropriate.**

#### Sample Statement:

Action NF-F1-A3: (We propose to retain current Forest Service recreation facilities within the interface areas and improve them to accommodate increasing use.) National Forest and Private Land Interface Management Our only comment on this issue falls within Action NF-F1-A3. We believe that this action should be broadened to read as follows: "Action NF-F1-A3: We propose to retain current Forest Service recreation facilities within the interface areas and improve them to accommodate increasing traditional, quiet recreation demand, and only motorized access where appropriate." (Preservation/Conservation, Kalispell, MT - #256)

## **PC #: 731**

### **Public Concern: The forest service should issue a commercial permit to any group requiring the services of an incident management team.**

#### Sample Statement:

Any action which causes the National Incident Management Team to be called in should not be considered on a non-commercial group use permit, but should be a commercial group use permit and the costs of the National Incident Team should be included in the group use permit fee. (Individual, Roosevelt, UT - #33)

## **PC #: 732**

### **Public Concern: The forest service should assure institutional groups have outfitters and regulation to guide their activities.**

#### Sample Statement:

Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.) Institutional groups, I think, need good outfitters & regulations same as other user groups. I followed a group of Boy Scouts one time. A disaster because it must not have been outfitted & the leader of the group could not have been experienced. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #107)

## **PC #: 737**

### **Public Concern: The forest service should open all gravel pits for motorcycle and four wheeler use.**

#### Sample Statement:

Utilize better what is already in place i.e. the Hungry Horse motocross track. From what I understand this track is on National Forest property and is only allowed to be groomed once yearly. There were over 600 entrants this Spring at that race. This facility should be improved, groomed, vault toilet, picnic tables, used as a place for education, possible user fees implemented. Motocross is a growing family sport. People in the Flathead Valley need a safe place to practice, ride and

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have the motocross experience without driving out of the Flathead Valley. 600 people, their family and fans coming to Hungry Horse, MT is great for the economy! Volunteers are willing to work on maintaining that track and should be allowed to do that. We need input from you on how to accomplish this. Open up all FS gravel pit areas to be used as play areas for motorcycles and 4 wheelers. That would be a great place to spin your tires and do donuts rather than on the trails and FS roads. (Recreational, Whitefish, MT - #966)

**PC #: 729**

**Public Concern: The forest service should regulate institutional outfitter activities by timing and group size.**

Sample Statement:

RM-F6: Institutional use needs to be regulated - timing and group size. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #541)

## Section: Developed Facilities, Commercial Uses, Permits, Fees

**PC #: 265**

**Public Concern: The Forest Service should set priorities in its forest plans for maintaining roads, trails, and other recreational infrastructure already in place.**

Sample Statement:

The FS plan should set priorities for maintaining the infrastructure that is now in place; the roads, the trails, campgrounds and picnic areas. (Individual, Stevensville, MT - #524)

**PC #: 736**

**Public Concern: The forest service should encourage dispersed recreation to spread impacts and conflicts.**

Sample Statement:

Recreational facilities should be maintained, and in some cases improved, however, dispersed recreation should be encouraged to spread out impacts and user conflicts. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #626)

**PC #: 730**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not consider groups over 500 as noncommercial even if the group is split.**

Sample Statement:

A non-commercial group use permit should not be permitted for groups exceeding a population of 500 individuals, even if camped at several campsites. (Individual, Roosevelt, UT - #33)

**PC #: 735**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not build big facilities to accommodate more motorized crowds.**

Sample Statement:

I would hope that in the recreation field that things could be left as rustic as possible. We have taken far too many quaint, rustic campgrounds, trailheads, day use areas, etc. and turned them into larger, more sterile facilities that have lost a lot of the charm and rustic appeal that they once had. The quality of experience has lessened in my opinion. Go back to using more log work, native stone, rough lumber, etc. Don't build mega facilities to accommodate more and more of the motorized crowds. The National Forests do not need to be urbanized. The National Forests need to offer a respite from that sort of lifestyle. (Individual, Condon, MT - #477)

**PC #: 738**

**Public Concern: The forest service should locate concentrated public and motorized use away from ecologically sensitive areas.**

Sample Statement:

We encourage locating campground facilities, and concentrated public recreational uses away from ecologically sensitive



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resources. We also encourage restricting motorized access to camping in ecologically sensitive areas, and identifying /designating camping sites to avoid sensitive areas and/or to encourage camping or concentrated public use in areas that are more resilient and can more easily recover from impacts and/or accommodate public use with less impacts. For example, suggested direction could include, "Campground facilities and concentrated public recreational use areas should be located away from ecologically sensitive areas and located in areas that are more resilient and can more easily recover from impacts and/or accommodate public use with less impacts." (Federal Agency or Official, Helena, MT - #257)

### **PC #: 739**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not collect fees from institutional outfitters, the general public or for noncommercial miscellaneous forest products.**

Sample Statement:

The plan should also resist the temptation to begin collecting fees for forest access for both institutional outfitters and the general public -- the needed funding should be provided already by our tax dollars and shifted from such budget areas as timber-related road maintenance and construction. Fees should also be exempted for all non-commercial (i.e., personal) collection of miscellaneous forest products. (Individual, West Glacier, MT - #601)

### **PC #: 741**

**Public Concern: The forest service should recognize the impacts of outfitters on the general public.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F3-A1: (We propose to manage all recreation activities, including Outfitter Guide use permits, based on the land's ability to accommodate activity without unacceptable resource impacts and diminishing desired experience levels. We would develop trigger points for early identification of deteriorating experience levels and resource conditions and a tool box of suggested management actions designed to mitigate or change these conditions. Management activities would range from educational (least restrictive), to limited-use permits (most restrictive). )Action RM-F4-A2: We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation) and need. The Forests need to recognize the impact of Outfitters on the general public. There seems to be no constraint on where outfitting is permitted relative to the general public. Most of the best hunting areas have an outfitter present. The general hunter is usually displaced to lesser quality areas by the dominance of an outfitter camp. I suggest the Forests identify large drainages in each mountain range where outfitters are not permitted, and if permitted now are not permitted to transfer or sell their permits, thus creating non-outfitted drainages in the future. Action RM-F6-A1: We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations. Institutional outfitters are no less impactful and create as much user conflict with the general public as commercial outfitters. I suggest that such service days be deducted from existing commercial outfitting on the Forests. (Individual, No Address - #53)

### **PC #: 755**

**Public Concern: The forest service should consider limiting outfitter and guide use on overused sites and closing them to use every other year or longer for recovery.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F3-A1 (We propose to manage all recreation activities, including Outfitter Guide use permits, based on the land's ability to accommodate activity without unacceptable resource impacts and diminishing desired experience levels. We would develop trigger points for early identification of deteriorating experience levels and resource conditions and a tool box of suggested management actions designed to mitigate or change these conditions. Management activities would range from educational (least restrictive), to limited-use permits (most restrictive). Add: Consider limiting outfitter use on "hammered sites" to every other year or longer for recovery purposes. (Individual, Condon, MT - #638)

### **PC #: 763**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not allow drop camps or reallocate temporary service days in congested areas.**

Sample Statement:

We request that in high use congested areas there should be no drop camps. (Individual, No Address - #205)

Sample Statement:

The lack of attention to resource allocation has, lead to some unfortunate situations. A guiding document is desperately needed! While we realize the value of the outfitting industry, we feel they should not receive preferential treatment. They

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should be expected to follow most of the same rules and come under the same scrutiny for impacts. They should not enjoy monopoly of resource use in any area. To that effect, we make the following comments and suggestions: Develop a guiding document on acceptable levels of commercial presence in any one area as it relates to private use. In high use areas, develop a mechanism to reduce outfitter presence and to create outfitter-free zones. Areas outside of the BMWC receiving the same pressures need to be dealing with resource allocation issues as well. It seems that there is no limit to the expansion based outside of wilderness. It is time for limits on outfitter client numbers and/or specific areas to be assigned. Drop camp rules and regs. need standardized and enforced. There is documented abuse of outfitter sponsored non-resident licenses used in drop camps...These outfitters are using drop camps as an extension of their base camps to avoid use of priority use days. Enforcement has been lax and penalties non-existent. We request that in high use (congested) areas, there should be no drop camps. We request that no temporary service days be reallocated in congested areas. Travel days. We question the entire process. It seems a way for these guys to increase their hunter days without cost...We would request that travel days be abolished. (Individual, No Address - #925)

**PC #: 762**

**Public Concern: The forest service should maintain the policy of no commercial guiding on the North Fork River. Outfitter levels should not be increased.**

Sample Statement:

RM-F3: The current policy of no commercial guiding in the North Fork should continue. This is strongly supported by the vast majority of North Fork landowners and probably by the majority of users as well. We may adamantly disagree on many of the findings in this proposal, but we agree on this. River outfitter levels should not increase. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #534)

Sample Statement:

Other than river floating, outfitters that can operate from bases outside of the area, commercial guiding or outfitting services should not be allowed in the North Fork of the Flathead River drainage. (Individual, Columbia Falls, MT - #659)

Sample Statement:

RM-F3: The current policy of no commercial guiding in the North Fork should continue. River outfitter levels should not increase. (Preservation/Conservation, Polebridge, MT - #705)

**PC #: 761**

**Public Concern: The forest service should look at other outfitting opportunities on the Hungry Horse Reservoir and the South Fork of the Flathead River below the hungry horse dam.**

Sample Statement:

At the recent Spring meeting with the Flathead River Outfitters, comprising Glacier Raft Company, Great Northern Float Trips, Montana Raft Company and Wild Rive Adventure and the Hungry Horse Ranger District we were told that the Middle and North Fork of the Flathead River Management Plan would not be a part of the Forest Plan Revision. This is unfortunate as it needs revision. I know that the comment period was over April 22, 2004, but please, consider my comments in regards to the Flathead Forest Plan revision. 1. Initiate a River Management Plan. If it is not part of the Forest Plan Revision, you should implement a team to start the process. It seems that the staff of the Hungry Horse Ranger District is the most knowledgeable and possibly with some outside help could do the revision. The last River Management Plan for the Flathead Rivers was done 18 years ago, in 1986. It contains language about "freedom of choice." if the LAC standards are exceeded, everyone floating the river - both private and outfitters - would have to acquire a permit. This would affect an estimated 35,000 to 45,000 users per year and would be a heavy and expensive burden for the USFS to bear. The outfitted public and special use permittees would be greatly impacted. Please look at what is going on with the BLM Managed Deschutes River. "Common Pool" is the terminology there, which is the same as "Freedom of Choice". 2. Look at other outfitting opportunities on the Hungry Horse Reservoir and the South Fork of the Flathead below Hungry Horse Dam. There are recreational opportunities being lost in both of these locations. The South Fork River below the dam has clear fishable water during May and June run off when the North Fork and Middle Fork Rivers are muddy. There is fishing demand at that time which could be provided by the outfitters of the Middle Fork and North Fork. This would help to extend their short season making their operations more viable. The Hungry Horse Reservoir also has early (Business, West Glacier, MT - #946)

**PC #: 760**

**Public Concern: The forest service should initiate or implement a team to start a river management plan update for the Middle Fork and North Fork of the Flathead River.**

Sample Statement:

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At the recent Spring meeting with the Flathead River Outfitters, comprising Glacier Raft Company, Great Northern Float Trips, Montana Raft Company and Wild Rive Adventure and the Hungry Horse Ranger District we were told that the Middle and North Fork of the Flathead River Management Plan would not be a part of the Forest Plan Revision. This is unfortunate as it needs revision. I know that the comment period was over April 22,2004, but please, consider my comments in regards to the Flathead Forest Plan revision. 1. Initiate a River Management Plan. If it is not part of the Forest Plan Revision, you should implement a team to start the process. It seems that the staff of the Hungry Horse Ranger District is the most knowledgeable and possibly with some outside help could do the revision. The last River Management Plan for the Flathead Rivers was done 18 years ago, in 1986. It contains language about "freedom of choice." if the LAC standards are exceeded, everyone floating the river - both private and outfitters - would have to acquire a permit. This would affect an estimated 35,000 to 45,000 users per year and would be a heavy and expensive burden for the USFS to bear. The outfitted public and special use permittees would be greatly impacted. Please look at what is going on with the BLM Managed Deschutes River. "Common Pool" is the terminology there, which is the same as "Freedom of Choice". 2. Look at other outfitting opportunities on the Hungry Horse Reservoir and the South Fork of the Flathead below Hungry Horse Dam. There are recreational opportunities being lost in both of these locations. The South Fork River below the dam has clear fishable water during May and June run off when the North Fork and Middle Fork Rivers are muddy. There is fishing demand at that time which could be provided by the outfitters of the Middle Fork and North Fork. This would help to extend their short season making their operations more viable. The Hungry Horse Reservoir also has early (Business, West Glacier, MT - #946)

**PC #: 759**

**Public Concern: 60. The forest service should issue new outfitter and guide permits based on public need, carrying capacity and resource condition. (reword of proposed action)**

Sample Statement:

The goal shouldn't be outfitter and guide maximization. Any approval for outfitting and guiding must be based upon a clear showing of public need, carrying capacity, and other resource concerns. Again, the direction in the plans needs to ensure any outfitting that occur in Wilderness be necessary and proper. As currently proposed, this issue is slighted. (Preservation/Conservation, Moscow, ID - #509)

**PC #: 749**

**Public Concern: 50. The forest service and Fish Wildlife and Parks should work with the public and each other on public and resource allocation decisions.**

Sample Statement:

We request the FS and Mont. FWP personnel (both biologists and enforcement) work with each other on resource allocation. (Individual, No Address - #205)

**PC #: 756**

**Public Concern: The forest service should look at the history of service an outfitter provides to the public before action is taken to move an operation.**

Sample Statement:

Comment 5 continued:RM-F5-A1 (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness).): I would strongly oppose requiring summer trip campsites be allocated. Flexibility for camping on summer trips needs to be retained for a couple of reasons. Travel time between campsites will vary with the weather, size of trip, inadvertent loss of horses, an injury to livestock or a person are examples. (Special Use Permittee, Augusta, MT - #676)

**PC #: 748**

**Public Concern: The forest service should keep track of perpetual rule and record offenders and use the history of noncompliance to cancel outfitter guide permits**

**PC #: 754**

**Public Concern: The forest service should consider limited entry only as a last resort and only for short well defined time periods with public input.**

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### Sample Statement:

The inclusion of an "institutional outfitter" category is a welcome change as education is the most important tool the Forest Service has in achieving its goals for the public which it serves. Due to the low level of funding allocated to education, the USFS must rely on cooperating organizations to help. When designating what constitutes an "institutional outfitter" the plan should focus on entities that can prove that they are primarily dedicated to education over recreation and profit. (Individual, West Glacier, MT - #601)

### PC #: 752

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should consider allowing mountain bike travel on existing cross country trail systems. ( needs category change)**

### Sample Statement:

Action AM-F4-A1: (We propose to limit bicycle travel to designated routes and prohibit cross-country bicycle travel.) Regarding Action: AM-F4-A1I like this because it will funnel use into areas that can be managed better. You should also consider: Mountain bike use in areas that are already used in other seasons. I.E. cross- country ski trails because these trails are already permitted and could be used in the summer for hiking and mountain biking (Business, Essex, MT - #569)

### Sample Statement:

[Action RM-F4-A1: (We propose to maintain existing allocation limits where applicable (primarily the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex), but allow flexibility to move use days to shoulder or summer seasons. Days that are in excess of those being used historically, up to the existing limit, could be reallocated to a general pool of temporary days. New outfitters could be considered if existing outfitters do not have the resources to provide the desired services. New uses and allocation to different seasons would be determined based on need and the resource's ability to handle impacts.)) Regarding Action: RM-F4-A1I like this because we need to consider year-round use.[Action RM-F4-A2: (We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation) and need.))Regarding Action: RM-F4-A2I don't like this because we need to increase permitted day use, but don't limit the number of permits as long as overuse is not present. We can accomplish this by spreading the use out.[Action RM-F5-A1: (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness.)) Regarding Action: RM-F5-A1I like this action, but we should be careful so we may allow new activities to enter an area set aside for a specific use. (Business, Essex, MT - #569)

### PC #: 751

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should consider permitting small groups, 2-12 people, to other providers' not just institutional organizations and existing outfitters.**

### Sample Statement:

[Action RM-F4-A1: (We propose to maintain existing allocation limits where applicable (primarily the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex), but allow flexibility to move use days to shoulder or summer seasons. Days that are in excess of those being used historically, up to the existing limit, could be reallocated to a general pool of temporary days. New outfitters could be considered if existing outfitters do not have the resources to provide the desired services. New uses and allocation to different seasons would be determined based on need and the resource's ability to handle impacts.))][Action RM-F4-A2: (We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation) and need.))Regarding Action RM-F4, You should also consider: Permitting small group (2-12 people) guided hikes; small group day-guided photography, ecology, educational hikes and seminars into National Forest, Wilderness or Roadless areas with permits based on the general area to be visited without relationship to hunting parties or traditional outfitters that impact the land in a much different way. These permits should be available for "profit" business/organizations, not just institutions or previously permitted outfitters. (Business, Essex, MT - #569)

### PC #: 750

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should publish definitions for the following: 1) Day Camp 2) Spike Camp 3) Camp for Outfitters (Outfitter Camp).**

### Sample Statement:

One item for clarity that might be helpful would be to publish definitions of: 1) Drop camp, 2) Spike camp, and. 3) camp for outfitters. Among outfitters and the public, there seem to be several interpretations of what these names actually indicate.

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Consistency across the entire Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (BMWC) would be helpful. MFWP is aware of the moratorium that was established between 1978 and 1982, which limited the number of outfitters that can operate in the Bob. Although use of those days is allowed, the public could react negatively in the future should those days ever be fully utilized. Perhaps some public awareness efforts would be useful should those numbers increase. (State Agency or Official, Missoula, MT - #338)

### **PC #: 757**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should not authorize any temporary service days during the fall hunting season in the North Fork of the Sun.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.) Comment Action RM-F6-A1 We agree with a category of institutional outfits & a pool of service days. This pool of service days should come from 40% of days that are currently not being utilized of the original 30,000 originally allocated. Don't support allocating any more use days beyond the original 30,000 days. (Individual, Conrad, MT - #722)

### **PC #: 774**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should not implement an area system for the summer season of use.**

Sample Statement:

Comment 5 continued: RM-F5-A1 (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness).): I would strongly oppose requiring summer trip campsites be allocated. Flexibility for camping on summer trips needs to be retained for a couple of reasons. Travel time between campsites will vary with the weather, size of trip, inadvertent loss of horses, an injury to livestock or a person are examples. (Special Use Permittee, Augusta, MT - #676)

### **PC #: 775**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should allow more flexibility in the allocation of user days to outfitters, institutional outfitters and address changes in demand.**

Sample Statement:

Hard fast rules concerning # of days by outfitters or by institutional outfitters is not sound management. I encourage more flexible management with cut backs in down times and increases in better years. (Recreational, Conrad, MT - #236)

Sample Statement:

We agree that greater flexibility in allocating use days would help address changes in demand, again keeping the potential impacts on wildlife resources in mind. The implementation of a zone management system, would not only provide more clarity for outfitters and more consistency between the National Forests, but also be an important tool for ensuring their use would not compromise the natural resource values of the Forest. (Preservation/Conservation, Missoula, MT - #566)

### **PC #: 776**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should develop and alternative that implements a cap of 18,200 service days on commercial outfitting until a thorough analysis of outfitted and non outfitted use impacts are completed for all LAC standards.**

Sample Statement:

Existing outfitter use is about 18,200 service days in the BMWC. This is out of the approximately 30,000 priority and temporary service days that could be potentially used if every day was used. This 30,000 day cap has been in place since 1978-80. An additional 1,855 institutional service days were added in 1995 without doing a Forest Plan amendment that were expected to be within the 30,000 service day cap. I would strongly encourage implementing a cap on the existing amount of actual outfitter use, 18,200 service days. Continuing this artificial 30,000 service day cap that outfitter use could increase to, while many LAC standards are exceeded, with no end in sight for standards in all areas to be met, does not seem reasonable. This should be considered as a major issue to be used to develop an alternative to the proposed action, until a

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thorough analysis of the outfitted and non-outfitted use impacts on all of the 10 LAC standards is completed. (Individual, Kalispell, MT - #701)

### **PC #: 777**

**Public Concern: The forest service should develop and alternative that requires all forms of motorized outfitting be restricted to designated routes.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F3-A1: (We propose to manage all recreation activities, including Outfitter Guide use permits, based on the land's ability to accommodate activity without unacceptable resource impacts and diminishing desired experience levels. We would develop trigger points for early identification of deteriorating experience levels and resource conditions and a tool box of suggested management actions designed to mitigate or change these conditions. Management activities would range from educational (least restrictive), to limited-use permits (most restrictive).)The Forest Plan Revision process must develop and analyze alternatives which require that all forms of current and proposed motorized outfitting activities be restricted to existing forest road systems where there are no other adverse resource impacts from permitting such use. Roadless areas and Forest trails are significant and critical valuable resources and must be preserved for quiet (non-motorized) uses. (Preservation/Conservation, Hamilton, MT - #720)

### **PC #: 758**

**Public Concern: The forest service should conduct public scoping when considering a transfer of an existing permit to a new outfitter.**

Sample Statement:

Some areas within the BMWC seem to be experiencing actual or perceived increases in outfitter use. Perhaps some level of public scoping would be appropriate when request is made to transfer an existing outfitter permit to a new outfitter. This would give the public an opportunity to express concerns or support for proposed changes where general public use has historically existed. (State Agency or Official, Missoula, MT - #338)

### **PC #: 744**

**Public Concern: The forest service should standardize drop camp rules.**

Sample Statement:

Drop camp rules and regs. Need to be standardized. (Individual, No Address - #205)

Sample Statement:

The lack of attention to resource allocation has, lead to some unfortunate situations. A guiding document is desperately needed! While we realize the value of the outfitting industry, we feel they should not receive preferential treatment. They should be expected to follow most of the same rules and come under the same scrutiny for impacts. They should not enjoy monopoly of resource use in any area. To that effect, we make the following comments and suggestions: Develop a guiding document on acceptable levels of commercial presence in any one area as it relates to private use. In high use areas, develop a mechanism to reduce outfitter presence and to create outfitter-free zones. Areas outside of the BMWC receiving the same pressures need to be dealing with resource allocation issues as well. It seems that there is no. limit to the expansion based outside of wilderness. It is time for limits on outfitter client numbers and/or specific areas to be assigned. Drop camp rules and regs. need standardized and enforced. There is documented abuse of outfitter sponsored non-resident licenses used in drop camps...These outfitters are using drop camps as an extension of their base camps to avoid use of priority use days. Enforcement has been lax and penalties non-existent. We request that in high use (congested) areas, there should be no drop camps. We request that no temporary service days be reallocated in congested areas. Travel days. We question the entire process. It seems a way for these guys to increase their hunter days without cost...We would request that travel days be abolished. (Individual, No Address - #925)

### **PC #: 746**

**Public Concern: The forest service should tighten up itinerary rules;  
1)concentrate on recording actual use in camps, 2) not give credit to outfitters for unused days during the five year review process, 3) make unused priority service days available to other outfitters as temporary days on a first come first served basis, and 3) provide consistent FS presence in congested areas.**

Sample Statement:

RM-F4-A1 (We propose to maintain existing allocation limits where applicable (primarily the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex), but allow flexibility to move use days to shoulder or summer seasons. Days that are in excess of those being used historically, up to the existing limit, could be reallocated to a general pool of temporary days. New outfitters could be considered if existing outfitters do not have the resources to provide the desired services. New uses and allocation to

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different seasons would be determined based on need and the resource's ability to handle impacts.): You mention maintaining existing allocation limits within the BMWC. To better define the problem take a look at the moratorium numbers. The 18 to 20,000 use days that exist between the 30,000 maximum and the average annual use needs to be made available annually to the outfitters on first request basis and designated temporary but available the following years until not applied for. Not only that, but credit should be given for those days used when the permit is analyzed every 5 years; i.e. the "use or lose" current policy if that policy is continued. Moreover if an outfitter can show consistent use of days taken from the 20,000 pool over a period of 5 years, they should be eligible for having those days be allocated permanently. RM-F5: This idea or program should be explored with the individual outfitters. Many campsites have been located in a particular area for many many years and consideration should be given for having provided good service at those locations before any thought is given to moving them. (Special Use Permittee, Augusta, MT - #676)

### Sample Statement:

Priority use days. The FS folks at the public meeting pointed out that there is a cap of 30,000 PU days in the BMWC of which approximately 60% is currently used. There were requests to increase that amount. We disagree. Given the level of outfitting presence now, we see no need to increase the cap and suggest that institutional outfitting and seasonal flexibility changes be included in the total. There is plenty of room for additions in areas and seasons where acceptable. Abuse of priority use days. In our eyes, it is an issue where the FS has dropped the ball. The past several years there has been little effort to assure compliance. We believe there is regular and substantial abuse. In visiting amongst ourselves, we have come to believe it occurs in summer, bow season, and regular season. We have been placed in the position of watchdog and we are not happy about it. We demand more attention to this issue. Perhaps a good start would be to tighten up itinerary rules. Another step would be a concerted effort to actually record. What hunters are in what camp. The statement "we don't have time to chase them down" doesn't hold much water with us; rearrange priorities and make time. Another plus would be a consistent FS person in congested areas. What constitutes use of a hunter day (priority use day)? Outfitters claim friends and relatives don't count? Each individual using those camps for hunting affects us. We compete directly against them but we operate under different rules. Another abuse is shuffling outfitted hunters in and out within a hunt as changes in itinerary. Makes it very difficult to keep track of who is where....kind of a shell game. And they have free travel days to do it? For instance, if elk are spotted in Big George, they take hunters out, using travel days, then hunt Big George with no limits on numbers or days. Other hunters are brought into the wilderness to fill those slots, using travel days. (Individual, No Address - #925)

### PC #: 753

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should consider year around outfitter use.**

### Sample Statement:

[Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.))]Regarding Action: RM-F6-A1I like this because we need to recognize institutional outfitters but they should not be allowed to compete with the established outfitters. (Business, Essex, MT - #569)

### PC #: 764

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should increase day use activities, but limit the type or number of outfitters based on existing facilities, resource capability social impacts and need or increase access opportunities. Increased day use may create more user conflicts.**

### Sample Statement:

Recreation and Outfitter & Guide Management-Our primary concerns in this area relate to heavy use at limited access points and competition with commercial outfitters. Increasing the number and types of outfitted services, as indicated in Action RM-F4-A2, without increasing access opportunities will only lead to more restrictions, which we oppose.[Action RM-F4-A2: (We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation) and need.))] (Recreational, No Address - #579)

### Sample Statement:

We support the idea of recognizing institutional outfitting and putting some limits on the same. There needs to be some well thought-out methods of determining the difference between a purely educational effort, as conducted by some schools, compared to some rehab-type operations that charge huge fees for other services and claim the outdoor experience is non-profit. (Recreational, No Address - #579)

### Sample Statement:

Action RM-F4-A2: We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation) and need. Group's rewrite: We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation), social impacts (limiting the number

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of people in one place at one time), and need. Dave suggested and the group agreed that they should specifically mention this type of intangible degradation by adding the phrase "social impacts" to the action. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #825)

### **PC #: 772**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should implement an areas system for outfitter and guide operations.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F5-A1: (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness).)COMMENT: Zone management for outfitters who conduct long-term operations in the same area is feasible and provides managers with a tool to provide the general public areas that are outfitter free. Area system management of outfitters should be encouraged to diminish conflict between themselves and other public users. A similar approach is recommended for day and roving outfitter operations. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #230)

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F5-A1: (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness).)ACTION RM-F5-A1COMMENT:Zone management for outfitters who conduct long-term operations in the same area is feasible and provides managers with a tool to provide the general public areas that are outfitter free Area system management of outfitters should be encouraged to diminish conflict between themselves and other public users. A similar approach is recommended for day and roving outfitter operations. (Recreational, Hamilton, MT - #323)

Sample Statement:

RM-F4: AgreeRM-F4-A1: Agree[Action RM-F4-A1: (We propose to maintain existing allocation limits where applicable (primarily the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex), but allow flexibility to move use days to shoulder or summer seasons. Days that are in excess of those being used historically, up to the existing limit, could be reallocated to a general pool of temporary days. New outfitters could be considered if existing outfitters do not have the resources to provide the desired services. New uses and allocation to different seasons would be determined based on need and the resource's ability to handle impacts.))RM-F4-A2: Agree[Action RM-F4-A2: (We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads))]RM-F5: Given the success of the zone concept of management in Idaho, Wyoming, and Eastern Oregon as reported by Sue Heald, I am in support. AgreeRM-F5-A1: Agree[Action RM-F5-A1: (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness))] RM-F6: AgreeRM-F6-A1: Agree[Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.)) (Place Based Groups, Victor, MT - #560)

### **PC #: 765**

#### **Public Concern: The forest service should not allocate any more service days for the BMWC above the current cap of 30,000, but allocate institutional days and seasonal flexibility days from the existing cap.**

Sample Statement:

We see no need to increase the cap and suggest that institutional outfitting and seasonal flexibility changes be included in the total. (Individual, No Address - #205)

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.)Comment Action RM-F6-A1We agree with a category of institutional outfits & a pool of service days. This pool of service days should come from 40% of days that are currently not being utilized of the original 30,000 originally allocated. Don't support allocating any more use days beyond the original 30,000 days. (Individual, Conrad, MT - #722)



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**PC #: 773**

**Public Concern: 74. The forest service should not implement an areas system for outfitter and guide operations especially on the BMWC.**

Sample Statement:

I really don't like Action RM-F5-A1: (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness). )because recreation management on the Plains-T.F Ranger District is presently working very well. Tightly regulated permit areas have no provision for game movement, areas that will be burned out in the future. Outfitted public should have the same rights & privileges of the non-outfitted public. (Individual, Thompson Falls, MT - #318)

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F5-A1 "We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn) This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites, A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness

Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness)"I personally do not support the area system. It leads to a feeling of ownership by the Outfitter. Before adopting this approach you need to use the NEPA process for each unit. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #513)

Sample Statement:

RM-F4-A2 (We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation) and need).I support the proposed action. Addressing the 20+ year-old "temporary" freeze/moratorium on outfitted services in the Bob Marshall is LONG overdue.RM-F5-A1 (We propose to move toward an area system of outfitter management, where its use would be appropriate in dealing with potential outfitter/public conflict (i.e. the Great Burn). This would focus primarily on operations involving base camps or reserve sites. A similar approach with different guidelines may be applied to roving and day use operations. Changes are not proposed where established outfitter guide programs are working well (i.e. Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex/Mission Mountain Wilderness)). As a permittee, I would strongly oppose an area system of outfitter management in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. (Individual, Seeley Lake, MT - #517)

**PC #: 771**

**Public Concern: The forest service should require institutional outfitters to have a licensed outfitter (licensed by the state) accompany its group and carry liability insurance. The cap on new outfitters should also apply to institutional organizations**

Sample Statement:

RM-F6: There needs a specific policy for institutional outfitter groups.RM-F6-A1 (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.): Any pool of days for this group should be simply created with a maximum cap so that there will be no conflict develop over areas visited and unacceptable resource degradation. There should be a requirement that a licensed (licensed by the state of Montana) outfitter accompany the group. They then can either have one of their own group become qualified and licensed or they can hire another licensed outfitter. No exceptions should be made since there is a liability involved here. Outfitter rules all refer to "protecting the health, safety and welfare" of the public. Moreover there should be a requirement for liability insurance just like is currently required for permitted and licensed commercial outfitters. If there is no fee charged and the party is operating as a group of individually responsible members; then they should be treated no differently than the general public with the same regulations that are applicable to the general public. Any cap on the number of new outfitters operating in the BMWC should apply to these groups same as any other outfitter classification. (Special Use Permittee, Augusta, MT - #676)

**PC #: 745**

**Public Concern: The forest service should abolish travel days for outfitters.**

Sample Statement:

We would request that travel days be abolished. (Individual, No Address - #925)

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### **PC #: 743**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not allow the outfitters to have any permanent facilities associated with their camps such as furniture, saw horses, corals.**

Sample Statement:

our complaint is with permanent corrals, hitch racks, furniture, saw horses, and use of steel reinforcements. (Individual, No Address - #205)

Sample Statement:

While traditional private use and its impacts have received a huge amount of scrutiny the past few years, the commercial segment has not. Perhaps because of the close relationship the outfitters have with the FS, they seem to receive less scrutiny. While we are being hammered about latrine poles, pole saw horses, pole crotches, etc they remain untouched. We have no complaint with the fact that they have administrative permanent sites; our complaint is with permanent corrals, hitch racks, furniture, saw horses, and use of steel reinforcements. What is good for us should apply to them. There seems to be a huge perceptual difference in what is allowed in our camps vs. theirs. There also seems to be a definitive lack of penalties when the rules and laws are broken. (Individual, No Address - #925)

### **PC #: 742**

**Public Concern: The forest service should exhibit more control over the outfitter industry in certain areas based on relationships to public uses. It should identify areas where outfitters are not permitted, limit expansion outside of wilderness, limit client numbers and assign areas. If this is not possible then eliminate outfitter guide use.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F3-A1: (We propose to manage all recreation activities, including Outfitter Guide use permits, based on the land's ability to accommodate activity without unacceptable resource impacts and diminishing desired experience levels. We would develop trigger points for early identification of deteriorating experience levels and resource conditions and a tool box of suggested management actions designed to mitigate or change these conditions. Management activities would range from educational (least restrictive), to limited-use permits (most restrictive). ) Action RM-F4-A2: We propose to increase permitted day use activities, but limit the number of permits based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads) resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation) and need. The Forests need to recognize the impact of Outfitters on the general public. There seems to be no constraint on where outfitting is permitted relative to the general public. Most of the best hunting areas have an outfitter present. The general hunter is usually displaced to lesser quality areas by the dominance of an outfitter camp. I suggest the Forests identify large drainages in each mountain range where outfitters are not permitted, and if permitted now are not permitted to transfer or sell their permits, thus creating non-outfitted drainages in the future. Action RM-F6-A1: We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations. Institutional outfitters are no less impactful and create as much user conflict with the general public as commercial outfitters. I suggest that such service days be deducted from existing commercial outfitting on the Forests. (Individual, No Address - #53)

Sample Statement:

Finding RM-F3 and RM-F4 are of great concern to our membership, especially at wilderness trailheads. We feel that providing additional day use outfitter services in many cases might only increase present user conflicts. There are too many factors to consider at this point for our members to either support or reject these actions. Finding RM-F5 presents a concept most of our members are unfamiliar with, so we are looking for more information before commenting. The general concept of maintaining outfitter-free areas is attractive. (Recreational, No Address - #578)

Sample Statement:

...we feel there are areas where the outfitting industry needs adjustment and control. The NF of the Sun is one of those. (Individual, No Address - #925)

Sample Statement:

Develop a guiding document on acceptable levels of commercial presence in any one area as it relates to private use. In high use areas, develop a mechanism to reduce outfitter presence and to create outfitter-free zones. Areas outside of the BLM receiving the same pressures need to be dealing with resource allocation issues as well. It seems that there is no limit to the expansion based outside of wilderness. It is time for limits on outfitter client numbers and/or specific areas to be assigned. Drop camp rules and regs. need standardized and enforced. There is documented abuse of outfitter sponsored non-resident licenses used in drop camps... These outfitters are using drop camps as an extension of their base camps to avoid use of priority use days. Enforcement has been lax and penalties non-existent. We request that in high use (congested) areas, there should be no drop camps. We request that no temporary service days be reallocated in congested areas. Travel days. We question the entire process. It seems a way for these guys to increase their hunter days without cost... We would request that travel days be abolished. (Individual, No Address - #925)

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### **PC #: 766**

**Public Concern: The forest service should draw pools days for institutional outfitters from the 40% of the 30,000 capped days that are not currently utilized.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.)Comment Action RM-F6-AIWe agree with a category of institutional outfits & a pool of service days. This pool of service days should come from 40% of days that are currently not being utilized of the original 30,000 originally allocated. Don't support allocating any more use days beyond the original 30,000 days. (Individual, Conrad, MT - #722)

### **PC #: 768**

**Public Concern: The forest service should recognize institutional outfitters provided the category is supported by a needs assessment and is part of the total need for O&G services.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F6-A1"We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations. I have no objection to recognizing this category of commercial enterprise provided it is supported by a valid needs assessment. It must be a part of the total need for O&G services. You need to consider why this use cannot be handled by the present O&Gs. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #513)

### **PC #: 767**

**Public Concern: The forest service should develop policy for institutional outfitters that directs management, simplifies paperwork, and clarifies screening criteria to determine appropriate applicants.**

Sample Statement:

RM-F6: There needs a specific policy for institutional outfitter groups.RM-F6-A1 (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.): Any pool of days for this group should be simply created with a maximum cap so that there will be no conflict develop over areas visited and unacceptable resource degradation. There should be a requirement that a licensed (licensed by the state of Montana) outfitter accompany the group. They then can either have one of their own group become qualified and licensed or they can hire another licensed outfitter. No exceptions should be made since there is a liability involved here. Outfitter rules all refer to "protecting the health, safety and welfare" of the public. Moreover there should be a requirement for liability insurance just like is currently required for permitted and licensed commercial outfitters. If there is no fee charged and the party is operating as a group of individually responsible members; then they should be treated no differently than the general public with the same regulations that are applicable to the general public. Any cap on the number of new outfitters operating in the BMWC should apply to these groups same as any other outfitter classification. (Special Use Permittee, Augusta, MT - #676)

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.)Conclusions: The group agreed that institutional use should be appropriate for the forest, not something they could do on private lands. Although, the USFS currently screens all groups to determine that the use is appropriate, the group concurred that additional language should be added. Action RM-F6-A1: We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations. The number of permits will be limited based on existing facilities (trails and trailheads), resource capability (land's ability to handle use without degradation), social impacts (limiting the number of people in one place at one time), and need. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #825)

### **PC #: 770**

**Public Concern: The forest service should make clear distinction between purely educational outfitters who focus on education and groups that focus on rehabilitation for fee and claim non profit status. Permit preference should be given to institutional operations that develop programs around responsible use of the forest.**

Sample Statement:

The inclusion of an "institutional outfitter" category is a welcome change as education is the most important tool the Forest Service has in achieving its goals for the public which it serves. Due to the low level of funding allocated to education, the USFS must rely on cooperating organizations to help. When designating what constitutes an "institutional outfitter" the plan

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should focus on entities that can prove that they are primarily dedicated to education over recreation and profit. (Individual, West Glacier, MT - #601)

Sample Statement:

You should also consider giving preference to those groups who because of previous Forest Service decision have been encouraged to develop programs around responsible use of the Forest. I am involved in teaching proper use of the natural resources provided by our Forests. Because they have a proven record of teaching and of responsible use of the Forests, and are an existing institutional outfitter. (Church, Missoula, MT - #662)

### **PC #: 769**

**Public Concern: The forest service should cap pool days available for institutional outfitting and not allow institutional outfitters to compete with established outfitters.**

Sample Statement:

[Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.)]Regarding Action: RM-F6-A1I like this because we need to recognize institutional outfitters but they should not be allowed to compete with the established outfitters. (Business, Essex, MT - #569)

Sample Statement:

RM-F6: There needs a specific policy for institutional outfitter groups.RM-F6-A1 (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.): Any pool of days for this group should be simply created with a maximum cap so that there will be no conflict develop over areas visited and unacceptable resource degradation. There should be a requirement that a licensed (licensed by the state of Montana) outfitter accompany the group. They then can either have one of their own group become qualified and licensed or they can hire another licensed outfitter. No exceptions should be made since there is a liability involved here. Outfitter rules all refer to "protecting the health, safety and welfare" of the public. Moreover there should be a requirement for liability insurance just like is currently required for permitted and licensed commercial outfitters. If there is no fee charged and the party is operating as a group of individually responsible members; then they should be treated no differently than the general public with the same regulations that are applicable to the general public. Any cap on the number of new outfitters operating in the BWC should apply to these groups same as any other outfitter classification. (Special Use Permittee, Augusta, MT - #676)

### **PC #: 740**

**Public Concern: The forest service should take historic use into account and grant priority service days when allocating use to intuitional outfitters.**

Sample Statement:

I really like Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.)because...Flathead Lutheran Camp has historic days dating back 30 years and the plan does not talk about historic days for institutional outfitters. It is very important that our camp is granted time each year for its important ministry to youth. We have been very responsible for the times and places used. I don't like Action RM-F6-A1: (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.)because...I believe priority use days should be granted to historic institutional outfitters like Flathead Lutheran Camp. Their programs are a very positive effort toward youth understanding of the beauty of the areas and proper and responsible usage of them. (Church, Dutton, MT - #1)

Sample Statement:

I would like to see the Institutional Outfitter designation implemented as a way of making the system more fair and equitable to the various user groups. (Individual, Condon, MT - #477)

Sample Statement:

You also should consider giving long term institutional outfitters with historic use, priority use days, because it would recognize regular users, it would recognize historic use, it would enable regular institutional outfitters to plan ahead, it would reduce F.S. paperwork. I really don't like Action RM-F6-A1 (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations.) Because if the "pool" for institutional outfitters implies a lottery or drawing each year, that would be devastating to regular historic users like Flathead Lutheran Camp. (Individual, Kalispell, MT - #485)

Sample Statement:

I really like Action RM-F5 because groups like Flathead Lutheran Camp will be able to continue to use the forests and the wilderness. I don't like Action RM-F6-A1 (We propose to recognize the category of institutional outfitter and establish a pool of service days to be used by the public through institutional organizations). because historic users should be considered for institutional outfitters like Flathead Lutheran Camp so they can plan their use on a yearly basis. (Individual, Kalispell, MT - #490)

**PC #: 778**

**Public Concern: The forest service should consider a new ski area at Lolo Peak and Carlton Ridge.**

Sample Statement:

My Name is Todd Frank and I own and operate The Trail Head in Missoula MT. I wanted to take a moment to encourage you to consider the idea of a commercial ski area on Lolo Peak and the Carlton Ridge area of the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forest. As a business owner in Missoula I am encouraged by the opportunity that would be provided by creating a destination ski area to compete with Big Sky and Big Mountain. In this era of limited resource harvest on the National Forests I see a ski area as an opportunity to create value in our public lands with a minimal resource impact. I believe the additional skiing that is provided by this area will enhance businesses that depend on clean air, clean water, and visitors from other areas to survive. (Preservation/Conservation, Bozeman, MT - #615)

**PC #: 779**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not consider developing Lolo Peak as a ski area.**

Sample Statement:

And finally, I am not sure if it is part of the proposed plan, but please do not consider opening and developing Lolo Peak for a ski area. Missoula already has plenty of area skiing, the elevation is too low to ensure a consistent and natural good snow pack, and the area provides not only important wildlife habitat, but it serves as an important aesthetic backdrop to the whole of the Missoula Valley. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #801)

## **Section: Scenery and Visual Resources Management**

**PC #: 780**

**Public Concern: The forest service should consider motorized and non-motorized trails as part of the natural landscape and recognize them as equals with respect to impacts, addressing them fairly and equally.**

Sample Statement:

Visual and other impacts associated with motorized trails have been cited as significant negative impacts. Many non-motorized trails have environmental impacts similar to motorized trails. Existing wilderness and non-motorized areas include many trails that are visually and functionally similar to primitive motorized roads and motorized trails. For example, the Mount Helena trails, and the main trails into the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat Wilderness at Benchmark, Holland Lake, and Indian Meadows and the main trails into the Anaconda Pintler Wilderness are similar visually and functionally to many primitive motorized roads and motorized trails. Additionally, trails resulting from activities including wild animals and Native Americans have always been a part of the natural environment. We request that the existence of trails be considered part of the natural landscapes, and that the visual appearance of motorized trails and non-motorized trails be recognized as equal in most cases and that the environmental impacts of motorized and non-motorized trails be addressed fairly and equally. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

**PC #: 781**

**Public Concern: The forest service should protect visuals along tall major trails and the Continental Divide.**

Sample Statement:

Please protect the viewsheds (and trail/wild area experience) of all the major trails in these national forests, including the Continental Divide Trail and other trails. (Individual, Roanoke, VA - #796)

## **Category: Land Ownership and Designations**

### **Section: Land Ownership and Management**

**PC #: 782**

**Public Concern: The forest service should quantify the impacts of private development within the forest and compare them with the impacts caused by mechanized forest visitors on the wildlife resource.**

Sample Statement:

The encroachment of residences into the forest is often the most significant factor contributing to the loss of summer and/or winter wildlife habitat. First, we request that the impact of these permanent encroachments be quantified and compared to the relatively minor impact that mechanized forest visitors have on wildlife habitat. Secondly, public land visitors should not have to pay the price in the form of motorized closures required to offset the impact of permanent encroachments by private residences. Proper assignment of restrictions would rest on those private individuals who permanently encroached on the natural habitat. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

**PC #: 785**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not consider promoting land exchanges, conservation easements, land purchase or right-of-way; because it is considered stealing private property and it will remove land from the tax base and adds more management responsibility to a struggling agency.**

Sample Statement:

The proposal to have a Forest Plan to promote strategies "(such as land exchange, conservation easements, land purchase, and right-of-ways)" is a biased pronouncement of the Wildlands Project policy that is totally inappropriate to a good faith revision process at this point in time. With millions of acres of Federal land already at risk due to lack of management, the last thing local communities and the State of Montana needs is for more property rights to transfer into failing Federal management. To advocate use of tax revenues to promote expansion of National Forest inefficiencies and remove land from local tax base is totally inappropriate. You have admitted in the finding above that if National Forest gets more land, there will be little public use or management. This is not a public issue, it is not a viable alternative, and it should not be considered in developing alternatives. (Multiple Use or Land Rights, Bigfork, MT - #588)

Sample Statement:

Action EM-F5-A1: (We propose to identify linkage zones at the landscape scale to facilitate species movement and genetic exchange.)NO opposed to land exchange, conservation easement, land purchase, and right-of-way. I consider this outright possible stealing of private property. Any government agency that dose should be arrested and jailed, their is no accountability by the government, so we the people must file charges. I wish all agency ys. understood how you are taking are rights away, then there are some that don't care. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #233)

**PC #: 784**

**Public Concern: The forest service should continue to pursue public access through private land by acquisition or right-of-way and maintain ingress and egress that is open to the public for motorized and non motorized use as part of any land adjustment. Use agreements should be established to mitigate user and land owner conflicts.**

Sample Statement:

Action NF-F1-A5: The group generally agrees with this proposed action, but recommends one important addition, as shown: We propose to develop land adjustment goals, which encourage open space; other recreation opportunities, and provide reasonable access to NFS lands within the private land and forest interface. Ingress and egress easements to NFS lands will be provided Or maintained in any land adjustments[Action NF-F1-A5: (We propose to develop land adjustment goals, which encourage open space, other recreation opportunities, and provide reasonable access to NFS lands within the private land and forest interface.))] (Place Based Groups, Columbia Falls, MT - #565)

Sample Statement:

Agencies are encouraged to acquire private land and right-of-ways to provide access to public land that is now blocked off to the public. This action is necessary to reverse the prevailing trend over the past 35 ? years of less access to public land and

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the significant cumulative impact of that trend on motorized access and motorized recreation. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

Sample Statement:

Anytime there is a land exchange between private and public entities, a public access easement or right-of-way should be required in order to offset the trend of less public access to public land over the past 35 ? years and the significant cumulative impact of that trend on multiple-use recreationists. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

Sample Statement:

The elimination of public access to public lands through private property has also contributed to the loss of motorized access and motorized recreation opportunities. We request that agencies acquire private land and right-of-ways to provide access to public land that is now blocked off to the public. This action is necessary to reverse the prevailing trend of significantly less public access to public land over the past 35 ? years and the significant cumulative impact of that trend on multiple-use recreationists. Private property owners that border public land should not benefit from public land without providing access to the public. Any private landowner that owns land that borders public land and does not provide public access to that public land should also be denied access to that public land under the principles of fairness and reciprocity. This action is necessary to reverse the prevailing trend of significantly less public access to public land over the past 35 ? years and the significant cumulative impact of that trend on multiple-use recreationists. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

Sample Statement:

Agencies are encouraged to insure that access to trails is not blocked by private lands and that private landowners do not have special access privileges. Where private landowners have elected to block public access to public lands, the boundary between that landowner and public land should be closed to motorized access using a "boundary closure" in order to avoid special access privileges for private landowners onto public land. Motorized access for the public on the public lands side should remain open to the boundary closure and the acquisition of public right-of-way should be pursued with the private landowner. Agencies are encouraged to keep motorized access through private land open to the public. Every public access closure through private land should be challenged and protected by asserting legal right-of-ways. The cumulative impact of this lack of action has created private motorized reserves on public lands or defacto wilderness/non-motorized/exclusive-use areas accessible only to private landowners. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

Sample Statement:

Easements across private lands should be maintained and protected as a public resource. Managers should not buckle to land owner complaints about traffic, congestion,, trash. etc.- instead the manager should establish programs that mitigate issues through education and enforcement, but maintain public access to the maximum extent possible and practical given an active management perspective. (Individual, Missoula, MT - #413)

### **PC #: 786**

**Public Concern: The forest service should continue land exchanges, conservation easements, fee purchase and right-of-way to benefit wildlife habitat protection, linkage zones etc.**

Sample Statement:

We also appreciate your willingness to address the issues surrounding sale and subdivision of private lands within or adjacent to national forest lands. A broad land adjustment strategy is needed to address both landscape connectivity (EM-F5) as well as management issues within the wildland-urban interface zone (NF-F1). FWP has been actively working with multiple partners to keep working forest lands from being converted to residential uses. Active Forest Service participation through land exchanges, conservation easements, fee purchases and right-of-way acquisitions could greatly help our efforts if we can coordinate our various programs. (State Agency or Official, No Address - #694)

Sample Statement:

NF-F1-A5: (We propose to develop land adjustment goals, which encourage open space, other recreation opportunities, and provide reasonable access to NFS lands within the private land and forest interface.)"Land adjustment goals" should include purchase or easement of private land for wildlife habitat protection, linkage zones, etc. The concentration of private land interface areas in valley bottoms or critical low elevation habitat makes them even more important. (Preservation/Conservation, Polebridge, MT - #705)

### **PC #: 783**

**Public Concern: The forest service should not close motorize opportunities to offset or compensate for impacts created by private development.**

Sample Statement:

The encroachment of residences into the forest is often the most significant factor contributing to the loss of summer and/or winter wildlife habitat. First, we request that the impact of these permanent encroachments be quantified and compared to the relatively minor impact that mechanized forest visitors have on wildlife habitat. Secondly, public land visitors should not

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have to pay the price in the form of motorized closures required to offset the impact of permanent encroachments by private residences. Proper assignment of restrictions would rest on those private individuals who permanently encroached on the natural habitat. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

**PC #: 787**

**Public Concern: The forest service should help local Upper Swan citizens acquire Plum Creek lands that are for sale, to retain public access for recreation use and consolidate checker board ownership.**

Sample Statement:

Action RM-F1-A1: (Forest recreation use numbers also indicate this increasing use trend. We propose to manage this increase in use by validating or establishing Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class (ROS) for all general forest areas and Opportunity Class (OC) designations for all proposed wilderness and special designated areas to describe desired future conditions. ROS and OC class would be assigned within management areas. This process would identify a broad array of recreation opportunities depending on the stated desired future condition.)In the Upper Swan, USFS should help local citizens to acquire for public use Plum Creek lands which are up for sale. Proposed land sales will drastically reduce public access to land traditionally given to public use. This will have serious impact on recreational and resource uses of some of the best land in the Upper Swan and will, of course, impact the National Forest share of the "checker board" ownership in the Upper Swan. (Individual, Condon, MT - #606)

**PC #: 788**

**Public Concern: The forest service should develop land adjustment goals that heavily weigh local economic considerations, encourage open space, other recreation opportunities and provide reasonable access to NFS lands within the private land and forest interface. (modified proposed action)**

Sample Statement:

Action NF-F1-A5 (We propose to develop land adjustment goals, which encourage open space, other recreation opportunities, and provide reasonable access to NFS lands within the private land and forest interface.):We propose to develop land adjustment goals, heavily weighing local economical considerations, to encourage open space, other recreation opportunities and provide reasonable access NFS lands within the private land and forest interface. (Place Based Groups, No Address - #822)

Sample Statement:

Action NF-F1-A5: (We propose to develop land adjustment goals, which encourage open space, other recreation opportunities, and provide reasonable access to NFS lands within the private land and forest interface.)NO, provide reasonable access within the private land interface. (Individual, Hamilton, MT - #233)

## Section: Rights-of-Way Management

**PC #: 789**

**Public Concern: The forest service should insure that access to trails is not blocked by private land and adopt a policy stating " any private land owner that borderers public land and does not provide public access to that public land should also be denied by an order, access to that public land under the principles of fairness and reciprocity.**

Sample Statement:

The elimination of public access to public lands through private property has also contributed to the loss of motorized access and motorized recreation opportunities. We request that agencies acquire private land and right-of-ways to provide access to public land that is now blocked off to the public. This action is necessary to reverse the prevailing trend of significantly less public access to public land over the past 35 ? years and the significant cumulative impact of that trend on multiple-use recreationists. Private property owners that border public land should not benefit from public land without providing access to the public. Any private landowner that owns land that borders public land and does not provide public access to that public land should also be denied access to that public land under the principles of fairness and reciprocity. This action is necessary to reverse the prevailing trend of significantly less public access to public land over the past 35 ? years and the significant cumulative impact of that trend on multiple-use recreationists. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

Sample Statement:



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Agencies are encouraged to insure that access to trails is not blocked by private lands and that private landowners do not have special access privileges. Where private landowners have elected to block public access to public lands, the boundary between that landowner and public land should be closed to motorized access using a "boundary closure" in order to avoid special access privileges for private landowners onto public land. Motorized access for the public on the public lands side should remain open to the boundary closure and the acquisition of public right-of-way should be pursued with the private landowner. Agencies are encouraged to keep motorized access through private land open to the public. Every public access closure through private land should be challenged and protected by asserting legal right-of-ways. The cumulative impact of this lack of action has created private motorized reserves on public lands or defacto wilderness/non-motorized/exclusive-use areas accessible only to private landowners. (Recreational, Helena, MT - #339)

**PC #: 790**

**Public Concern: The forest service should honor its obligation to maintain access through public land to private in holdings.**

Sample Statement:

As ia review the maps I see several places where there is a real conflict between the proposed roadless parcels and both private and state owned lands. I would believe the forest service has an obligation to maintain access for these other property owners. (Individual, Minneapolis, MN - #148)